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WORLD OF SPORT

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WORLD OF SPORT
TODAY

Arafat sworn in as PNA president

JON IMMANUEL

YASSER Arafat swore himself in yesterday as president of the Palestinian National Authority, setting the stage for convening the 38-member Palestinian Council after Ramadan ends next week.

About 100 dignitaries and senior security officers attended the 10-minute ceremony in the council chamber, which is located in the renovated former IDF headquarters in Gaza City.

Arafat was greeted by a band playing "Biladi," the national anthem.

"Who would believe that the PLO, described as a terrorist organization by Israel, is now an authority and will become a state," said Mohammed Abu Sridanah, head of the religious courts in the Palestinian Justice Ministry.

Arafat swore on the Koran "to be faithful to my country and to keep the constitution and the interests of the Palestinian people, the security of their land and to achieve their hopes and aspirations, as God is my witness."

He made no speech, saying he had nothing to add to the words of Palestinian National Council acting chairman Salim Za'anoun, who said: "We are living this day for our Arab and Islamic nation, the triumph of Salah a-Din. We are returning to Palestine, and we are passing from the small jihad to the great jihad."

Arafat has frequently interpreted the "great jihad" as the conquest of oneself, as opposed to the "small jihad," which is military conquest of the non-believer. Salah a-Din, a Kurd, defeated the crusaders, to whom Israel has been frequently compared by Palestinians.

Despite Arafat's mention of a constitution, the Palestinian Authority does not yet have one. A basic law, in its fourth draft, has yet to be approved by Arafat. It limits the president to two five-year terms.

One of Arafat's first tasks as president, formally known as *ra'is* in the Oslo 2 accord, will be to appoint a cabinet and prime minister. As president, according to the draft law, he "has the power to preside over their meetings."

Notably absent from the proceedings was Dr. Haidar Abdel-Shafi, a critic of the Arafat's authoritarian style, who is likely to (Continued on Page 2)



Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu shake hands prior to their meeting yesterday at the Prime Minister's Office to discuss a date for elections. (AP)

Election date: May 28 or June 4

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres and Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu agreed yesterday on a May 28 election date, but opposition from the religious parties may move the poll to June 4.

Netanyahu phoned Peres last night following consultations with party leaders and Shas leader Aryeh Deri, and told him May 28 would be acceptable to the Likud, but that Peres should consider the objections of the religious parties, which prefer June 4. Peres said he would consider the alternative date.

"Elections will be held either on May 28 or June 4. May 28 is alright with us, but I will have to take this up with my colleagues," Netanyahu said earlier after emerging from a largely ceremonial meeting at the Prime Minister's Office.

The problem, he explained, "rests with some of the religious factions, which prefer June 4 because it is further from Shavuot. In any event, the date is not a cardinal issue."

The two sparred good-naturedly in front of the TV cameras, but the friendly exchange ended as soon as the camera crews left.

Peres began by asserting that "Jerusalem is not an issue. The entire nation is united in this matter."

Netanyahu retorted that "in the language of Shakespeare, you protest too much."

Peres, well aware that his advancing years and Netanyahu's relative youth may become an issue, appeared eager to soothe Netanyahu with fatherly advice: "Don't worry. You already have grey hair, why add to it unnecessarily?"

SARAH HONIG

Their sparring grew more serious when it turned to the Likud campaign against Labor's intention to amend the law that forbids showing candidates in TV news coverage during the month preceding election day.

Netanyahu said this would play into the hands of the government, "especially as you can't accuse our media of being pro-Likud." Peres retorted that "the media is not pro-Likud or pro-Labor but pro-news. They are balanced and will not bow to anyone's instructions."

Netanyahu later maintained that "this is a serious issue of access to the media by the opposition during a campaign which is the most crucial this nation has known, with the issues in the balance being the future unity of Jerusalem, Israel's control of the Golan, and the establishment of a terrorist Palestinian state adjacent to our heartland."

Likud MKs earlier met with the Ministerial Committee on Elections and said that if the government pushes through bills rescinding the bans on showing candidates' faces on TV and on political advertising on Channel 2, the Likud would "make life difficult for the government" over the election date.

In response, the ministers warned that if the Likud makes the ban a condition for supporting the election date, the government would determine the date without consulting the Likud.

MK Michael Eitan warned the ministers that if Labor uses its narrow majority to change laws in its favor now, in the future others might use their majority to pass laws harmful to Labor. "It's a dangerous precedent," he said. The betting in Labor was that

the party might pull back from the proposed amendment, because it had become so controversial it might leave Labor open to accusations of loading the dice against the opposition. Any change in the law might only apply to the elections slated for 2000, as the Likud demands.

Another hot potato - the issue of how Labor would regard the establishment of a Palestinian state - will be taken up at a special session of the party convention on April 25, at which amendments to the platform will be taken up. The most controversial will be a proposal that to remove the platform clause opposing a Palestinian state.

Labor might also appoint two new MKs to replace Avigdor Kabalani and Emanuel Zissman, who have promised to return their mandates if the party demands that of them after the Golan, and the establishment of a Third Way is officially registered as a political party.

The new party's birth is to be announced tonight in a ceremony in Ramat Efal, to be attended by President Ezer Weizman. But the bureaucratic process of registering the party will take time.

At the end of it, and after the list of Knesset candidates is submitted to the central elections committee, Zissman and Kabalani said, they will "happily return our Knesset mandates to Labor for the remainder of the Knesset term."

The two have prepared letters of resignation in which they cite "the party's failure to live up to its own platform and declared principles. To our sorrow, we have realized that the Labor Party did not remain true to the promises it had made the voters on the eve of the last election."

Liat Collins contributed to this report.

Terrorism alert closes territories

CLOSURE was imposed on the territories last night under a high security alert, declared in anticipation of possible acts of vengeance for the killing of terrorist bomber Yihye Ayyash. The 40-day mourning period for Ayyash, known as "The Engineer," has just ended.

The decision to seal off Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip followed intelligence information that Hamas is planning a strike against an educational institution or public transportation in Israel. Senior security officials called on the public to be especially wary and to inform the authorities of anything suspicious.

The closure began last night at midnight and is to continue until further notice. It is expected to last at least until the beginning of next week.

Lebanon subpoenas 90 SLA men for treason

Two soldiers killed in zone

DAVID RUDGE

LEBANESE authorities have issued summonses against nearly 90 South Lebanese Army officers and soldiers. Lebanese newspapers reported yesterday.

The measures coincide with a marked intensification of Hizbullah attacks on the SLA, including one yesterday in which two SLA soldiers were killed and another seriously wounded. The attack occurred near Tair Harfa, in the western sector of the security zone.

Hizbullah said its gunmen had detonated a roadside bomb alongside an SLA patrol. The two SLA soldiers killed in the attack were reported to have been Christians from the same village inside the zone.

An SLA post in Rashaf in the zone's western sector, which has been a hotbed of Hizbullah activity lately, also came under fire yesterday. There were no reports of casualties.

Reports from Lebanon said there was a Sagger missile attack on an IDF convoy near the Beaufort Castle, in the eastern sector of the zone. There were no reports of casualties.

The summonses issued against the SLA soldiers, past and present, were for them to appear before a military tribunal in Beirut to answer charges of collaborating with the Israeli enemy and treason, the newspaper reports said.

Those named in the summonses are all former Lebanese army officers or soldiers who later joined the SLA. They include Col. Akel Ashem, considered by many to be the deputy to SLA commander Gen. Antoine Lahad, and several others who hold or held key posts. Some are retired.

The legal measures were seen by many observers here as an intensification of the psychological war being waged by Hizbullah and the Lebanese government against the SLA.

'Government freezes Har Homa project'

BILL HUTMAN

THE government has decided to freeze the controversial plan to build a new Jewish neighborhood at Har Homa in southeastern Jerusalem, according to sources close to the project.

The sources said contractors who were supposed to begin work in the coming weeks on infrastructure at the site, between Ramat Rachel and Beit Sahur, were told the start-up date was postponed indefinitely.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres also recently told opponents of the project, which is slated to include some 6,000 residential units, that at least for the meantime work would not go ahead. The government last year announced it was behind the plan.

Interior Minister Haim Ramon is committed to using his ministry - which must give final approval for construction - to hold up the Har Homa plan, according to the sources. The plan is awaiting approval by the district planning commission.

A spokeswoman denied that the ministry had already taken steps to prevent work at Har Homa, however she confirmed that Ramon had ordered no work to begin at the site until he had personally reviewed the plan.

"All signs indicate that the government has finally realized this is a politically inflammatory

Sneh: Some patients discharged prematurely due to cost-cutting

JUDY SEGEL

SOME hospital patients are being sent home "prematurely, when they are unprepared from a medical viewpoint to be discharged," Health Minister Ephraim Sneh said yesterday in a statement.

Sneh, who spoke before the Center for Social Policy Research, was quoted as saying that efforts to reduce hospitalization costs have resulted in early discharges, especially from internal medicine departments, many of whose patients are chronically ill or elderly.

Sneh said that patients currently remain in internal medicine departments "half the time that was commonplace a few years ago." The challenge, the minister declared, is to "stabilize the financing system for medical care by finding a realistic monetary ceiling for costs that do not erode services. If not, medical services provided to the public could be eroded by six to seven percent annually."

Health Ministry medical services director Dr. Yitzhak Berlovich denied that patients are being discharged prematurely.

"Every hospital department head or medical team in charge is responsible for ensuring that patients get the medical care they need. Any complaint we receive alleging premature discharge can serve as the basis for a disciplinary hearing or malpractice suit," Berlovich said.

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Peres to coalition: We've never had it so good

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres addressed a meeting of coalition MKs yesterday, and delivered a "we've-never-had-it-so-good" campaign speech.

Peres started by saying the government has an unparalleled record of improvements in all fields. "No other government has a record in four years, except for that of the early years of the state."

He described the peace with the Palestinians as "flourishing, unlike those in Ireland and Bosnia." He called the peace with Jordan "incredible."

Peres repeated his promise that the government would make

LIAT COLLINS

agreements putting an end to war in the region and, in a reference to the recent Nautilus laser test, said: "I warn those who fire the Katyushas not to wait very long. Soon there will be a weapon against Katyushas."

He also repeated his pledge to hold a referendum on a peace agreement with Syria. "What we want now is a mandate to conduct the negotiations with the Syrians." The referendum will allow people to vote on accepting the agreement, he said. "If the people want it, they'll endorse it; if they don't,

they won't."

He dismissed Likud claims that his government would divide Jerusalem or turn it into the capital of a Palestinian state. "Like a solid rock, we will stand firm on a united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel," he said.

He said that without the peace process, the country would return to the inflation rate seen in the days of the Likud. "There will be no devaluation and no recession," Peres said.

His speech also indicated Labor will place an emphasis on the country's youth and try to attract young and first-time voters.



Yasser Arafat accepts congratulations after swearing himself in as president of the Palestinian National Authority yesterday.

Labor submits early elections bill

LIAT COLLINS

LABOR Knesset faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen yesterday submitted four bills concerning early elections to Speaker Shevah Weiss.

The Ministerial Committee on Legislation, meanwhile, met and decided to waive the rule that a bill cannot be raised for preliminary reading for at least 45 days after it has been submitted, so the bills can be acted upon quickly.

The first bill proposes to dissolve the Knesset and hold elections on May 21. Cohen said the date is the preferred one, but is not sacred and can be changed to May 28.

Opposition parties are complaining that May 21 is too close to the Shavuot holiday.

The second would reduce the waiting period for the official results from 14 days to 10 days. The third bill says the second round of the prime ministerial election, if necessary, will take place two weeks after the first round.

According to the fourth bill, all those 18 years old on election day will be eligible to vote. It also allows those registered as citizens by February 29 to vote, and reduces the "cooling off" period for senior civil servants who want to run for the Knesset.

The early elections bill is scheduled to come up for preliminary reading tomorrow. Some clauses require a majority of 61 MKs.

Opposition meets to discuss early election

LIAT COLLINS

ALL opposition factions will work together to prevent the government from changing the laws on the electoral process, but welcome the announcement of early elections, Likud Knesset faction head Moshe Katsav said yesterday.

Opposition faction heads met to discuss the early elections. Among their chief concerns are changes in the law banning the showing of candidates faces on Israel Television for 30 days before the polls and the ban on Channel 2 running political advertising.

Katsav attacked Labor's use of Yitzhak Rabin's memory in its campaign. "I was pained to hear Prime Minister Shimon Peres open his speech [Sunday night] with a long and detailed recollection of the difficult moments surrounding Rabin's assassination. Rabin's murder is a national wound, not a party matter. If the Labor Party uses this terrible murder, it can only harm its dignity and its memory. We will preserve his honor and honor his memory," Katsav said.

Tsahi Hanegbi (Likud) said

Peres's speech was an attempt to put the blame for Rabin's assassination on the opposition, and that Peres had not given one good reason for bringing the elections forward.

National Religious Party faction leader Yigal Bihi said his party would be the third largest after the elections and welcomed early elections. "We need to unite and work together against election laws which are being dictated to us against our will," he said.

"The opposition must promote some election bills of its own like, one demanding that anyone who leaves his faction must leave the Knesset. This bill has passed preliminary reading," said Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan.

He also called for a multi-party covenant ensuring a clean, fair election campaign. Michael Eitan (Likud) made a similar suggestion.

"The public is not stupid," said Avraham Verdiger (United Torah Judaism). "If Labor uses the terrible murder of Rabin, it will

get hurt in the process. Therefore I think it won't use Rabin's murder for political gain."

MK Limor Livnat, responsible for the Likud's campaign, said Labor "must understand that if it uses the Rabin assassination in its campaign, we won't be able to still and do nothing while being hit below the belt."

She accused Shimon Peres of starting his campaign Sunday night by "saying everything but the truth."

The joint Likud-Tsomet campaign will stress such issues as preserving the status of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state, Livnat (Likud), who met with Tsomet MKs and candidates and representatives of the advertising agencies responsible for the campaign, said.

Nehama Romen, a Tsomet candidate, said the campaign should be marked by the theme of unity. The campaign line should be to persuade the public that Benjamin Netanyahu must be prime minister, she said. "Otherwise we'll be left with a divided Jerusalem, Golan Heights, and State of Israel."

Interior Ministry warns settlements against using gov't funds in elections

HERB KEINON

SETTLEMENTS cannot transfer funds to the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza if this money will be used in the upcoming election campaign, Avraham Kalagi, the director-general of the Interior Ministry, said yesterday.

Kalagi wrote the heads of the various local and regional councils in the territories saying it is forbidden to use the money they routinely transfer to the council for political purposes. The letter follows the settlement council's public endorsement of Benjamin Netanyahu for prime minister, and statements by the council's leadership that the organization's apparatus will be mobilized on Netanyahu's behalf.

Council spokesman Aharon Dohm said that Kalagi has nothing to worry about. According to Dohm, the money the local and regional councils transfer to the settlement body is not used for "political purposes," but rather to further development of the settlements.

Mooney for "other purposes," he said, does not come from the various local and regional councils.

The council is funded both by contributions from the 21 regional and local councils in the territories, which each pay a sum linked to the number of residents, and by privately raised funds. The settlement council has a well-oiled fundraising apparatus that raises millions of shekels a year abroad. The council itself does not receive government funds.

Ma'aleh Adumim Mayor Benny Kashriel said the Interior Ministry directive was unnecessary, and that it is clear that we "we will certainly not use tax-payers' money for partisan political purposes."

Kashriel said that as a member of the settlement council executive, he knows which funds are being used for which purposes.

Kalagi, in his letter, said that anyone who authorizes an illegal transfer of funds to the council will be penalized.

ARAFAT

(Continued from Page 1)

be nominated as president of the legislative council.

David Makovsky adds: Prime Minister Shimon Peres called Arafat yesterday to express his congratulations.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid sent a congratulatory cable to Arafat, indicating he would send another telegram when he leader becomes president of the Palestinian state.

Sarid wrote: "You, Mr. Arafat, have become a courageous and faithful partner for reconciliation between our two nations. I am sure you will continue to fulfill your duties in the wending and stubborn war against the enemies of peace, just as we must uproot our errant weeds."

"Hopefully, peace will develop and we will see you elected as president of a Palestinian state that enjoys good neighborhood relations and cooperation with the State of Israel."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Two killed, seven hurt in crash
Two persons were killed and seven injured yesterday, in a head-on collision between a truck and a van near the Negev town of Rahat. Police said the truck, which was turning left, apparently failed to yield the right of way to the van. The driver of the van was killed instantly - his body had to be cut out of the van - and one of his passengers later died of his injuries. The injured were taken to Beersheva's Soroka Hospital, where two were reported in critical condition; two in serious condition, and three in moderate-to-serious condition.

Supreme Court doubles rapist's sentence
The Supreme Court yesterday more than doubled the sentence of a man convicted of raping a mentally retarded girl. The man, who heads the Givat Ada Religious Council, was sentenced to 3 1/2 years by Haifa District Court. He appealed the harshness of his sentence, claiming the girl had consented to have sex with him. The state lodged a counterappeal, arguing that the girl had not really understood what was going on. Justice Eliezer Goldberg, Eliahu Mazza and Ya'akov Kedmi accepted the state's argument, and increased the man's sentence to eight years, plus two years' suspended.

Hai Vekayam head acquitted
Yehuda Etzion, the head of Hai Vekayam, was acquitted yesterday on charges that he violated a court order, issued last year, forbidding him from coming within three meters of the Temple Mount. Jerusalem Magistrate's Court Judge David Frankel ruled that the court order had violated basic laws. He said there had been no proof presented to the court that issued the order that Etzion had ever been convicted of a crime.

Vanunu nominated for Nobel Peace Prize
Anti-nuclear activist Joseph Rotblat, who shared last year's peace prize with the Pugwash group, has suggested that Mordechai Vanunu, imprisoned since 1986 for revealing secrets about the country's atomic weapons secrets, receive the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize. Other known candidates include US President Bill Clinton and Richard Holbrooke, a US assistant secretary of state, for their efforts to bring peace to Bosnia.

'Elections won't affect Syrian talks'
The early elections are not expected to affect the peace talks with Syria, Foreign Minister Ehad Barak said yesterday in New York. The talks will continue until shortly before the election and will resume shortly afterward, he said.

The talks with Syria will resume February 28 at Wye Plantation, Barak told reporters after a meeting with the Israeli consuls-general from the US and Canada. He is to meet tomorrow with members of the UN Security Council before returning to Israel.

Restitution body to deal with Swiss banks
Submission of inquiries into Holocaust victims' Swiss bank accounts, which involves a fee of some 300 Swiss francs, can be done through the World Jewish Restitution Organization, the organization announced yesterday. The announcement follows the Swiss Bankers' Association's admission last week that 51 financial institutions in Switzerland and Liechtenstein have some \$32 million worth of unclaimed, pre-1945 deposits in accounts which have been dormant since then. The SBA's figures are far lower than World Jewish Congress and Jewish Agency estimates, which ran into the hundreds of millions, even billions of dollars.

Two arrested after running roadblock
Two Israelis were arrested yesterday, after driving through two roadblocks north of Ramallah and nearly running down an Israeli policeman. The two, according to police spokesmen, were involved in an accident with a vehicle belonging to Palestinians, and were apparently trying to flee.

IDF, PA reach agreement on Rafah airport

JON IMMANUEL

FOLLOWING tense confrontations between the IDF and the Palestinian Police, an agreement was reached to resume preliminary work on the Palestinian Authority airport runway at Rafah.

The work can continue for three months, but Israel wants to see the final plans before giving its full authorization for the airport's construction.

In a secret meeting Sunday night attended by PA Chairman Yasser Arafat and Maj.-Gen.

Oren Shabor, the government coordinator in the territories, the PA agreed to change the angle of the runway by 10 degrees. This would alter takeoff and landing paths to reduce wind resistance and ensure flight routes will not be directly over the Egyptian border.

The Palestinians had planned the runway along the flattest route, which would have made it

cheaper to build.

There have been confrontations between soldiers and Palestinian policemen this week over Israeli attempts to stop the work, which is partly in an area under joint Israeli-Palestinian control. Military sources said the Palestinians started the work without getting all the necessary permits. Israel has to sit with the Egyptians as well, since part of the landing route is over Egyptian airspace, the sources said.

Arafat spoke with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak after the meeting, winning his approval for the airport, according to PA sources.

Israel insists that the terminal building be in an area under its authority so that it can monitor everyone arriving at and departing from the airport.

Meanwhile, near Bethlehem, Palestinians continued to protest the construction of a security wall near Rachel's Tomb. Local residents, led by elected PA council members, marched towards the tomb to protest the work.

At present, a wooden security fence takes up one lane of the two-lane road that goes past the tomb. Israeli sources said that the wooden structure is temporary and that the cement security wall being built will not take up road space.

Palestinians yesterday were unable to enter Jerusalem from Ramallah, nor could Israelis enter Ramallah, after the IDF blocked off the A-Ram junction. Palestinians said they suspected it was in retaliation for the roadblock set up by the Palestinian Police at the entrance to Bethlehem on Sunday.

Military sources said the roadblock was set up after stones were thrown at IDF soldiers in a joint patrol on Sunday. Students from Bir Zeit University protesting the roadblock clashed with troops.

Government committee on settlement construction to meet later this month

HERB KEINON

THE government's interministerial committee on settlements, which must approve new Jewish construction in the territories, is scheduled to meet for the first time in nearly a year on February 25. Housing Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer told a group of settlement leaders yesterday.

Ma'aleh Adumim Mayor Benny Kashriel, head of the Greater Jerusalem Forum, which met with Ben-Eliezer yesterday, said the housing minister told the group that building plans in Ma'aleh Adumim, Betar, Gush Etzion and Kiryat Sefer are among the topics on the agenda.

Kashriel said plans awaiting government approval include 3,000 new housing units in Ma'aleh Adumim, 500 in Gush Etzion, and "more than 1,000" each in Betar and Kiryat Sefer.

Kashriel said it is possible that convening the committee now is tied to the elections. "The government does not want to be perceived as stopping building in Greater Jerusalem," Kashriel said.

Kashriel warned that if plans are not approved, "we will embark on a struggle no less intense than what the Ouman workers waged. The minute we feel that our backs are against the wall, we will fight back." In the last few months, a number of meetings of the interministerial committee have been canceled at the last minute.

In addition to Kashriel, the other council heads at yesterday's meeting were Shaul Mizrahi of Givat Ze'ev, Yinon Ahimian of Efrat, and Shilo Gal of the Gush Etzion Regional Council.

Liba'i: Amir-led Knesset slate would never be permitted

EVELYN GORDON

A KNESSET slate composed of Yigal Amir, Ami Popper, and Avigdor Eskin could never happen, because it would violate several laws, Justice Minister David Liba'i said yesterday.

Liba'i was responding to reports that Avigdor Eskin - who is currently being investigated for issuing a curse calling for the death of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, and then praising the murder after it happened - asked Amir and Popper, who killed seven Arab workers in Rishon LeZion in 1990, to run with him for the Knesset.

Eskin told Lim yesterday that about two weeks ago he had been approached by American Jews that support the radical right, and they had offered to fund the campaign of a Knesset list headed by Amir. But the

idea died out, and he had never agreed to run on such a list, he said.

Eskin added he had considered setting up his own independent list, but had abandoned the idea when it became clear that elections were to be advanced.

Liba'i pointed out that before a slate can run for Knesset, it must be approved as a party. However, the party registrar is by law allowed to disqualify any party which incites to racism, rejects the democratic nature of the state, or appears to be a front for criminal activity.

"The murder of the prime minister is an unequivocal rejection of the democratic nature of the state, so the murderer and his supporters are absolutely disqualified to run for the Knesset," he said.

With great sorrow and profound grief, we announce the untimely passing of our beloved wife, mother and grandmother

ROSA SZABO

The funeral took place Tuesday, February 6, 1996 (16 Shvat 5756)

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The funeral will take place today, Tuesday, February 13, 1996, at 11 a.m. at the Caesarea Cemetery.

The Edelshtain, Bader and Shalit Families

Shiva at 14 Rehov Narkiss, Caesarea.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

THE WEEKLY MEETING of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place TODAY/TUESDAY February 13 at 12:15 p.m. (instead of the regular Wednesday meeting) at the YMCA, King David Street, for a visit to the Nazarene Rotary Club. The bus will leave from the YMCA at 12:30 p.m. promptly.

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Meshulam gang gets 48 hours in solitary for riot

RAINE MARCUS

UZI Meshulam and his 11 followers were placed in solitary confinement for 48 hours yesterday by the Prisons Service disciplinary committee, after they ran riot on Sunday.

On Sunday afternoon, the group announced that it was starting a hunger strike to express its dissatisfaction that Meshulam's eight-year prison sentence was reduced by "only" 18 months by the Supreme Court last Thursday. The group apparently will only be satisfied if Meshulam is acquitted.

Meshulam and his 11 followers demanded to be placed in solitary confinement, otherwise they would "give authorities good reason to place them in solitary." They then proceeded to tear and cut wires of the closed circuit TVs, thus justifying their incarceration in solitary confinement.

Once in solitary, they proceeded to "run riot," the Prisons Service spokesman said. As a result, Ayalon Prison warden Avi Harari sentenced them to an additional 48 hours in solitary confinement. A complaint was also filed with the police about the damage, estimated at some NIS 7,000, caused to the TVs and smoke detectors, and criminal files were opened against the group.

Meanwhile, three of Meshulam's followers - Avner Sa'ad, Yoav Shahi, and Zohar Hasson - awaiting trial for the attempted murder of prison guard Benny Aviram, were segregated from the rest of their group and transferred to the Nitzan lock-up.

On Sunday evening a group of Meshulam's followers, including minors, staged an illegal protest in the main street of Rishon LeZion in an attempt to disrupt traffic, said police. The juveniles were given orders by the adults, wore racist T-shirts, and shouted slogans condemning police and Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal.

When they refused to disperse, police arrested six men, two women, and two minors. They were released after questioning, even though they refused to cooperate with police.

Right-wing group petitions court on police 'censorship' of protest

EVELYN GORDON

MATEH Ma'amatz, a right-wing political action organization, yesterday petitioned the High Court of Justice against the police's refusal to let it hang a large sign as part of a protest against the administrative detention of right-wing figures.

The group planned to hold a two-week protest vigil, with attendance ranging from a few dozen to a few hundred people, opposite the Prime Minister's Office. The centerpiece of the vigil was to be a large sign, 16 meters long by 6 meters high, saying "The left's democracy: PLO murderers go free; opponents of (Prime Minister Shimon) Peres suffer arrest and persecution."

Asst.-Cmtr. David Caruso, on behalf of the Jerusalem police, okayed the demonstration, but banned the sign, saying it would distract drivers and violated traffic laws. When the petitioners pointed out that signs are illegal only on intercity roads, Caruso then said he could not permit the sign because it might cause disturbances.

When Mateh Ma'amatz promised that it would prevent disturbances, the police came up with a new reason: The land in question, at the corner of Ruppin and Kaplan Streets, was owned by the Israel Lands Administration, so the ILA's okay was needed.

The ILA said it could not okay the demonstration because it had leased this land to Hebrew University, so Mateh Ma'amatz suggested that it hold the vigil on "Demonstration Hill" across from the Prime Minister's Office instead. Caruso said this would be acceptable, if the group got a permit from the Jerusalem Municipality for the sign.

The group got the permit from the city's urban improvement department, and went back to Caruso. However, Caruso then reneged on the agreement to allow the vigil on "Demonstration Hill." Two days later Caruso said Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert had canceled the permit, so the sign was definitely out.

The petitioners called the municipality, which said that Olmert was not even in the country, and the permit given by Sharon was valid.



Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan (right) meets yesterday with Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny. Dayan summoned the envoy for an interview over the publication of sensationalist stories in the Egyptian press to the effect that Israeli medical students had removed the organs of Egyptian POWs murdered by IDF soldiers. Dayan told Bassiouny that, "Such reports do not contribute to the relations between the two countries." (Yitzhak Elharon)

Three Interior Ministry officials likely to face bribery charges

BILL HUTMAN AND LIAT COLLINS

THREE senior Interior Ministry officials will likely face bribery charges in connection with the scandal at the ministry's eastern Jerusalem office, police sources said yesterday.

Population Department head Yosef Tov, Avraham Ben-Atar, director of the eastern Jerusalem office, and Tova Amedi, a senior office official, have been under investigation for the past several months.

Parts of the files on the three have been turned over to the Jerusalem District Attorney, according to the sources.

Police will recommend charges be filed, the sources said. The police spokesman issued a statement denying news reports the investigation into alleged bribe-taking at the eastern Jerusalem interior ministry office is complete. The spokesman said there have been recent meetings between investigators and members of the District Attorney's Office, but that they were routine.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Haim Ramon and Yehoshua Matza, chairman of the Knesset Interior Committee, toured the east Jerusalem office yesterday to study first hand the changes made following the scandal, in which residents were discovered to be procuring identity cards and other documents without appearing personally.

Both concluded there had been significant improvements and the problem of "dealers" had been wiped out. Matza said there was still a problem with paid form-fillers required by the illiterate, but a solution is being sought.

'Davar Rishon' workers urge Histadrut to reconsider closure

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

"YOU'RE all fired," announced Davar Rishon Editor-in-Chief Ron Ben-Yishai to the daily newspaper's workers, who convened for an emergency meeting yesterday, following the Histadrut's decision to close down the paper.

The closed meeting was concluded by a call to the Histadrut to reconsider its decision to stop funding the newspaper, a move which sentenced Davar Rishon to death. As things stand now, the last issue will appear on Friday.

Addressing the workers after the meeting, Davar Rishon's works committee chairman Efraim Davidi attacked the Histadrut for not making enough of an effort to keep the newspaper afloat. He stressed that the paper's closure hurt not only its workers but media diversity in Israel.

Davidi pointed out that the Histadrut went

all out to help floundering plants, such as Oumman, to survive, even at the cost of millions on its strike fund.

"The only difference is that Oumman is in Ofakim and Davar Rishon is in the middle of Tel Aviv," he said, hinting at the possible interests of Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz, who is running for the Labor Knesset list in the southern district primaries. "Here there are also 200 families left jobless," he said.

Ben-Yishai, who briefed the workers on the attempts to find someone to buy the paper, blasted businessman Jean Friedman, whom he accused of leading him astray and withdrawing on the verge of signing a purchase agreement.

Ben-Yishai said that the media wiretapping affair had turned off many potential investors.

After the meeting, all the journalists resumed work, promising that the last four editions of the newspaper would be the best they ever published. Histadrut Treasurer MK Haim Oron expressed sorrow at the paper's demise, admitting that "for me this comes on top of Al Hamishmar's closure. It is another testimony to the changing values in Israeli society, that a newspaper like Davar Rishon, which could have broken even in one year, couldn't attract the public or private backing necessary to enable it to survive until then."

Oron warned that this process would not end with Davar Rishon. "Israeli society will pay a heavy price for the concentration of media power in the hands of a few private families, a venture which has already proved a failure," he said. "I don't believe in miracles, but it's hard to imagine

Law Committee approves bills on information and the disabled

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset Law Committee yesterday approved both the Freedom of Information Act and the Israelis with Disabilities Act for first reading.

The Freedom of Information Act is a major revolution in Israeli law, since it would for the first time give people the right to get information from government offices.

Under the bill, people would

have the right to obtain any information directly related to themselves, as well as general information of concern to individuals, such as data on air and water pollution. The government would be obligated to publicize a list of all its databases, and each ministry or public body would have to set up a division to handle information requests from the public.

The Israelis with Disabilities Act, meanwhile, is meant to prohibit discrimination against the disabled during the hiring process, by both public and private companies. It also requires the government to ensure access for the disabled to public places and transport, and makes the disabled eligible for special housing and education grants.

Court orders officials to cover costs of anti-smoking petition

JUDY SIEGEL

HAVE you tried to get someone to stop smoking in a public place or at work and get only a bored shrug or an angry curse in return? The High Court of Justice yesterday took a step that could scare the authorities into enforcing the law. Court Registrar Judge Alon Gillon ordered Haifa University, Health Minister Ephraim Sneh, Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal, and Haifa Mayor Amram Mizna to pay NIS 8,000 in court costs to cover the expenses of a group of Haifa University students who demanded that the no-smoking laws be implemented.

The protracted case has been pending for over a year. The students complained to the university that no fines were being levied on those who smoked in dormitories and other university facilities. After numerous court hearings, some 100 fines were finally handed out by inspectors.

After long negotiations, it was agreed that the students' suit would be canceled, in exchange for vigorous enforcement by the municipal and university authori-

ties. But when the students asked that the four bodies cover court costs, the ministries, the municipality, and the university balked. Gillon ordered the university to pay NIS 5,000; the Health and Internal Security ministers to jointly pay NIS 1,500, and the mayor to pay NIS 1,500. According to the no-smoking law relating to public places, complaints are made to the public institution responsible. The institution must make an effort to halt the smoking. If the violation continues, municipal inspectors can be called in, and if this is not effective or carried out, the police may be called.

The Health Ministry bears general responsibility for ensuring that the law is enforced but doesn't have its own inspectors.

Representatives of the Israel Lobby for the Prevention of Smoking were pleased by the decision, noting that public officials will now think twice before disregarding complaints about the non-enforcement of no-smoking laws.

Prostitution bill fails to pass first reading

LIAT COLLINS

A BILL which would have regulated prostitution failed 28-10 on first reading in the Knesset last night. Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan and Dan Tichon (Likud), among those sponsored the bill, were absent. The bill was initiated by Avraham Poraz (Meretz).

Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni spoke against it, but left the plenum before the vote, while the other Meretz MKs supported it, as did Tamar Gozansky (Hadash). The coalition voted against it, apparently at the behest of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, with an eye to the religious vote in the upcoming elections. In preliminary reading it had received strong support, particularly from Justice Minister David Liba'i. The bill was based

on the report by retired judge Hadassah Ben-Itto. Poraz said the bill was necessary "because the country can't act like an ostrich and ignore the fact that prostitution is openly flourishing and will flourish on the beaches, backyards, and stairwells. Now we have been prevented from regulating it and restricting it to places where it would not be a nuisance."

Aloni explained her opposition, saying: "As long as a woman is her husband's property in the State of Israel, I don't want to give a legal permit to something making her an object for the use of men. It would be best to first pass a law permitting a woman to have an abortion according to her own choice."

Army to notify families of Palestinian detainees

EVELYN GORDON

THE army will now immediately notify families by telephone when they arrest Palestinians, according to an agreement which was given the force of a verdict by the High Court of Justice yesterday.

The agreement was in response to a petition by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) and the Center for the Defense of the Individual (CDI). According to the petition, the army arrests dozens of Palestinians every month without informing their families, so that they seem to have simply disappeared. To locate the detainees, either attorneys or organizations, such as the CDI, must begin calling lock-ups all over the country.

According to the agreement, upon arresting someone, the army will ask for his family's phone number, and will call that number immediately to say that the person has been arrested and where he is being held. The army will also phone a lawyer of the detainee's choice, should the suspect request it. If the family does not have a phone, the army will send a postcard to the address given by the prisoner.

YOU DEMAND, WE COMPLY

EILAT AND THE NEGEV

Sold out in October, we're organizing another popular tour to the south. So get in now, for a really great time at a bargain price. Shorashim and The Jerusalem Post Travel Club's stimulating and informative English speaking off-the-beaten-track 4 day tour of the Negev and Eilat. We'll pick you up in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem, and on the way south visit the Air Force Museum at Hatzefim, and Michtesh Ramon (the Ramon Crater). We'll tour the Shoret Canyon, cruise the coral reefs in a glass-bottomed boat, and view Aqaba and Taba, take a jeep tour, yes, a jeep tour of Mt. Yo'ash, Ein Netafim, Nahal Shlomo, Nahal Yehoshafat and Nahal Rehav'am. There'll be two evening lectures and a night tour of Eilat. We'll be staying at the delightful PARADISE HOTELS in Eilat and our tour guide will be David Solomon.

The Dates: Mon., February 26- Thur., February 29 4 days, 3 nights.

The Price: NIS 1045, per person in a double room, half board, air conditioned bus from Jerusalem or Tel Aviv and return, escorts and guides, entrance to all sites, lectures, jeep tour, etc.

Shorashim: POB 7588, 14 Rehov Abarbanel, Rehavia, Jerusalem 91074. Tel. 02-686231 9:30 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. (ask for Romit or Tami)



"Going Up in Rank"

Immigrant Absorption in the Army

On Thursday night, 15.2.96, at 20:30, a live studio program will be held on local channel TV.

This program is aimed at new immigrants who are being called up to do military service, as well as their families.

If you have questions or concerns, you can call the officers or counsellors who will be in the studio.

The program will include film clips on various army activities.

Note: (a) Your calls to the studio will be taken from 19:00 in the evening: Tel: 03-9630110 / 9630111.

(b) Local Channel Stations "Tevel" / "M-TV" / "Idan" - Channel 9 "Gvanim" - Channel 7 "Arutzei Zahav" - Channel 45

Major warns of more bombs

PAUL MYLREA
LONDON

BRITISH Prime Minister John Major said yesterday that IRA guerrillas might detonate more bombs in the wake of a fatal London blast, but vowed to press ahead with elections to move the Northern Irish peace process forward.

In an emergency statement to parliament in which he paid tribute to the two men killed in Friday's blast, Major said the IRA had to resume its cease-fire before there could be any return to ministerial talks with Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing.

"This may not be the last such atrocity. More may follow, both here in the mainland and in Northern Ireland if the IRA cease-fire is not renewed," Major said.

He also announced a summit with Irish Prime Minister John Bruton in London, possibly next week, to try and hammer out a way to overcome the crisis in the peace process.

The *Irish Times* newspaper claimed that the blast in London's Docklands financial district, which caused an estimated £150 million (\$230 million) damage, was a one-off attempt to persuade Britain to change its plans for Northern Ireland.

"We are not at the end of the road for peace. If we are pushed back, we will start again. There can be no end to this search for a permanent settlement in Northern Ireland," Major told a somber House of Commons, the lower chamber.

"We may have to take more risks. We will not take reckless but if we see a risk that we believe is appropriate in the course of peace, a justifiable risk, then we will take it."

Bruton attacked Major's plan for elections to open the way for all-party peace talks, saying it would "pour petrol on the flames," but Major said it was still the best way forward.



A crowd of 4,000 people gather in front of Belfast's City Hall Square in a protest rally following Friday's IRA bombing in London. (AP)

"This proposal has been consistently misrepresented by Sinn Fein and misunderstood more widely," a grim-looking Major said.

"I repeat now that its purpose is to lead directly and speedily to negotiations between all parties committed to peaceful and democratic methods, aimed at reaching a comprehensive

political settlement."

The election plan, unveiled last month, is designed to get around the refusal of pro-British Unionists to talk to Sinn Fein until the IRA gives up its arms and Sinn Fein's insistence that all-party talks must start before arms can be scrapped.

Major, who was due to make a

rare television address to the nation later yesterday, clearly sought to put pressure on Sinn Fein to ensure a resumption of the IRA's 17-month-old ceasefire captured by Friday's bomb.

"We and the Irish government are at one on this: the ball is in the court of Sinn Fein and the IRA, if indeed

that distinction means anything.

"It is for them to show, through their words and actions, whether they have a part to play in the peace process or not. I am not in the business of slamming doors. But the British and Irish peoples need to know where Sinn Fein now stand."

(Reuters)

Hero cop found bomb

WENDY HOLDEN
LONDON

A POLICE officer who identified the IRA bomb in London's Docklands and evaded the IRA's attempt to detonate it Sunday is hailed as a hero.

Police officer Roger de Graaf, 36, whose wife is 13 weeks pregnant and who had just been told he had passed his sergeant's exams, was thrown to the ground by "what felt like a 200 mph wind."

As he lay curled up on the ground with shards of glass and debris raining down around him, he saw a car hurtling towards him - the driver still in shock. He managed to roll out of the way.

"There was a rumble and what felt like a 200 mph wind coming past my ears," de Graaf said. "I was knocked off my feet and I curled up like a ball. All I could think was, 'It is a bomb and I'm going to die.'"

"The car coming at me was an automatic stuck in gear. The driver was in shock. I thought, 'I've survived the bomb, I'm just going to get run over now.'"

"The car stopped as its bumper hit my back."

With blood pouring from an eye injury, de Graaf helped the driver of the car and other colleagues to take shelter as glass, metal and concrete showered down.

Despite his own injury, he helped

colleagues who also suffered minor injuries get a safe distance from the scene.

He eventually went to hospital where his injury required five internal stitches and a dozen external stitches.

During the pandemonium that followed the blast, he was able to borrow a mobile phone to reassure his wife that he was safe. The couple have a 20-week-old daughter.

She and his father had heard the explosion in Woodford, eight miles away, and said the doors had rattled in their frames.

De Graaf said he was "the length of a football pitch" away from the vehicle when the device exploded.

He and a colleague had previously become aware of the vehicle. "We were actually all sort of standing next to it, and we said 'maybe this one shouldn't be here,'" he said.

"We did some checks on it, the results of those checks aroused our suspicions a bit more. At that point we decided if it was going to be anything, that was going to be the vehicle."

He added: "I have done nothing heroic, nothing special. I'm just the one who made the checks on the vehicle and who has a very scratched face."

The Daily Telegraph

Librarian leaves estate for UCLA Holocaust program

TOM TUGEND
LOS ANGELES

A POLISH-BORN woman, who worked quietly as a librarian for 32 years, has left a totally unexpected bequest of \$592,000 to UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles) for Holocaust and Jewish studies.

Antonina (Toni) Babb, who died in 1994 at the age of 75, designated UCLA's Chair in Holocaust Studies as the beneficiary of her estate.

The gift will support not only UCLA's long-standing Holocaust studies but general Jewish studies at the university as well.

The unexpectedness of the bequest is compounded by the scant details available on Babb, a private person with apparently few friends and no known relatives.

According to UCLA sources, she was born in Poland in 1919, fleeing the country with the Nazi invasion of 1939.

After arriving to the US and completing graduate studies, Babb joined the staff of the UCLA library in 1955 and, until her retirement in 1987, devoted most of her efforts to the Germanic and Scandinavian book collections.

TORAT ERETZ YISRAEL



This book marks the first time that Rav Tzvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook's lectures have been translated into English. His teachings on Torah, *Emanah*, *Ahavah*, *Eretz Yisrael*, *Zionism*, the Holocaust, *Geula*, and the *Mashiach*, bring the encompassing Torah of *Eretz Yisrael* into unparalleled light. The book's commentary brings the reader into the *Beit Midrash* of Rabbi Kook, presenting an intimate understanding of his vision and the unique era of redemption which Rabbi Kook inspired the nation to see.

Translated by Zvi Fishman.
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Kasparov beats computer, evens match

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - World chess champion Garry Kasparov outmaneuvered a computer, rebounding from an opening-round loss and evening the six-game series at one win apiece.

Kasparov won the match Sunday in 73 moves with a triumphant display of long-range tactical thinking over Deep Blue, an IBM computer which has a calculating capacity of 200 million moves a second.

Feng-hsiung Hsu, the architect and principal designer of Deep Blue, ceded defeat after 5 hours, 45 minutes.

After the match, Kasparov said he had a key strategy for attacking the computer he referred to as "the monster." He discovered that by moving for safe positions rather than direct attacks, he could lure the machine into opening its defense.

"If you threaten, the machine will counter-attack," he said. "But if there is no threat, the machine will go about its business and eventually give you an opportunity."

Grandmasters observing the match said it takes a genius of Kasparov's caliber to recognize the moment and exploit it.

"Kasparov managed to develop a plan that extended beyond the computer's horizon," said observer David Levy, vice-president of the International Computer Chess Association. "Arguably, the computer didn't know what was going on."

Kasparov, 32, had suffered a startling loss in the first round when the computer took advantage of the Russian's wide-open, aggressive attack.

In the second round, Kasparov began cautiously with the conservative Catalan opening.

By consolidating his position and his pieces, he forced the computer to go on the attack.

In the 11th move, Kasparov made a gambit that had grandmasters puzzled, then smiling in appreciation. He captured a pawn, but exposed his queen, violating a fundamental rule known even to novices. But the gambit drew the computer into spreading its pieces and weakening its

defense.

"That's why he's the best," said grandmaster Dan Heisman.

The tide turned strongly in Kasparov's favor with his 19th move, when he offered a pawn the computer promptly captured, irrevocably weakening positions around its king.

Play resumes today in the series, which coincides with the University of Pennsylvania's celebration of the 50th birthday of the ground-breaking computer ENIAC.

The duel is the first to pit human against machine for a regulation, six-game chess match. The winner will receive \$400,000 with the remaining \$100,000 going to the loser. If Deep Blue wins, the money goes to IBM researchers working on the computer.

Kasparov, an Armenian-Jew who was born in Baku, Azerbaijan, and now lives in Russia, became the youngest world chess champion at age 22 when he defeated Russian Anatoly Karpov.

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Brain's timer is found

BALTIMORE (AP) - Scientists have located the brain's stopwatch - the spot that calculates whether you've got enough time to run across the street in front of a car or dash to the bathroom during a TV break.

It's called the interval timer and its job is to keep track of the minutes and seconds that make up everyday life.

Unlike the body's other timekeepers - the circadian clock, which keeps hormones, digestion, sleep and other functions running on a 24-hour cycle - the interval clock measures much shorter times.

It allows humans and other animals to learn and survive in their native habitat, whether that's the rain forest or the freeway.

To the wild, for instance, animals must keep track of how much time passes between catching prey. This is how they know whether to keep hunting in the same place or move on.

Humans put this faculty to other uses.

"Many gourmet cooks learn the specific duration for all the critical ingredients going into the dish," said Dr. Warren Meck of Duke University. "They learn to juggle in their heads different durations simultaneously."

Even non-gourmet cooks can boil an egg, brew coffee and make toast, all at the same time. That's because they have an interval timer.

Meck described the location of the timer - to the dead center of the brain - Sunday at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He and colleagues used magnetic resonance imaging to study the activity of the brain. They asked volunteers to squeeze a ball every 11 seconds. Then they watched what happened inside their heads.

The scans revealed that the striatum, a structure deep inside the brain, was working hard during this exercise.

In this, as with many other things, human brains work a lot like rats'. Meck's earlier research showed that rats trained to press a lever for food after a specified time used the same part of their brains.

Resnick testifies: Simpson took drugs, threatened ex-wife

NEW YORK (AP) - Faye Resnick testified in her deposition that O.J. Simpson used cocaine in the past and threatened to kill his ex-wife because she "rejected him, shamed and humiliated him," her lawyer said.

O.J. Simpson's attorneys were to begin their questioning of Resnick yesterday, and were expected to focus on her drug use.

Simpson has repeatedly said that Resnick's link to drugs led to the

Oscar nominations a tough call

BEVERLY HILLS, California (AP) - For the past two years, the Academy Awards lacked suspense. *Forrest Gump* and *Schindler's List* both dominated - as expected.

This year it's different.

On the eve of Oscar nominations, almost every category is too tough to pick. And the Golden Globes, typically Oscar indicators, only add to the uncertainty since there was only one multiple film-award winner.

The only three movies widely seen as sure bets to make the best picture nomination list when they are announced in a pre-dawn cere-

Diana fights to keep her title

LONDON - Lawyers acting for Princess Diana are insisting that she will not agree in principle to a divorce until she receives a clear undertaking that she will retain her existing title, "HRH the princess of Wales."

Government sources last week also disclosed that other conditions relating to her royal status must be resolved before the princess's lawyers, Mishcon de Reya, will agree to enter into formal divorce negotiations with Farrer and Co., who act for Prince Charles.

Despite newspaper reports that the prince and princess are close to divorce, *The Sunday Telegraph* has established that six weeks after the queen's letter asking the prince and princess to consider a speedy divorce, an announcement is many weeks away.

Whitehall sources confirmed last

Second attempt to blast rock fails to free Japanese bus

FURUBIRA, Japan (AP) - Desperate efforts to free a bus trapped in a highway tunnel failed again yesterday as a second dynamite blast intended to dislodge a huge slab of rock proved as ineffective as the first.

The setback left rescue workers at a loss for what to do next and deepened the anguish of family members, whose hopes of finding their loved ones alive have gradually ebbed since the accident happened early Saturday morning.

The rescue drama has dominated national news coverage and traumatized this tight-knit fishing village in northern Japan, where many of the 5,000 residents knew at least one of the 19 people on the bus.

Another person was believed trapped in a passenger car.

"Looks like they failed again," Masahiko Watanabe said as he watched the latest blasting attempt on television in his home.

Watanabe and other local residents were growing more irritated at what they saw as the slow pace of rescue efforts.

"They've wasted so much time, it's disgusting," Watanabe said, referring to the long delays between the blast Sunday and yesterday and an 11-hour stretch after the accident Saturday during which rescue officials deliberated over how to proceed.

At this point, few are holding out much hope that any survivors will be found after nearly three days in sub-freezing temperatures. Already people are referring to those with loved ones inside the tunnel as "bereaved" family members.

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- a new method for quick learning and memorizing the material, and much more.

Produced by Polink - Something Different, publishers of the Shalom From Jerusalem series for learning Hebrew - in cooperation with The Joint Authority for Zionist Education.

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System requirements: IBM PC 286 AT or higher, or compatible, with VGA/EGA/SGA screen and card MS DOS 3.3 or higher.

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FLAMES OF REVOLT

On February 1, 1944 the Irqun Zvai Leumi, under the leadership of Menachem Begin, declared its revolt against the British in Palestine. This proved to be a critical factor in the British relinquishing their occupation, and in the birth of the State of Israel. This thrilling, authentic 100 minute videocassette documents the complete story of the daring young men and women who made up the Irqun, the large-scale operations they undertook, and earth shattering events they caused, which shook the world and the Jewish community in Palestine. Includes interviews with Irqun fighters, British soldiers, historians, and archive film footage.

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US President Bill Clinton reaches out to supporters on Sunday during a campaign rally at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. (AP)

Dole in lead on eve of Iowa caucus

AFTER a long, hard-fought campaign that moved out of the farm sheds and onto the airwaves, Iowans voted last night in precinct caucuses throughout the state, offering the first real signs of how this year's presidential race will shape up.

SUSAN BAER
DES MOINES, Iowa

churches, schools, meeting halls and even homes in the state's 2,142 precincts at 7 p.m., closes a campaign segment noted for its virulently close and its expense.

Forbes to the top tier of candidates, the last week brought signs that his support was beginning to wane.

Detained Serbs to be sent to tribunal

DAVID CRARY
SARAJEVO

THE two Bosnian Serb officers whose detention has upset Bosnian peacemaking will be sent to the international war crimes tribunal, government sources and NATO officials said yesterday.

only one suspect in custody, and the transfer of the two ranking officers appeared likely to aggravate the Bosnian Serbs. The tribunal endorsed the arrests of Djukic and Krsmanovic after they occurred.

officers. Reporters saw the two men being taken under armed escort from the prison where they were held, apparently heading for a base of the international peace force.

Sri Lankan troops rampage

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (Reuters) - Government troops went on the rampage in eastern Sri Lanka over the weekend, killing at least 34 Tamil civilians and wounding more than 25 others, Tamil politicians and some of the wounded said yesterday.

Wounded civilians at Trincomalee hospital told Reuters that soldiers broke open doors and windows of houses and fire at those inside.

government to set up an impartial commission of inquiry to look into the matter.

Hussein: Fahd is doing well

AMMAN (AP) - King Fahd of Saudi Arabia is in good health and "doing extremely well," Jordan's King Hussein said yesterday on his return from the oil-rich kingdom.



Jordan's King Hussein performs the Umra, a minor pilgrimage in Mecca during his visit to Saudi Arabia on Sunday. (Reuters)

bolized the end of a five-year rift between the two Arab kingdoms which fell out over Jordan's refusal to join a US-led coalition force which fought Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War.

Report: Algerian forces kill 22 guerrillas

PARIS (Reuters) - Security forces have killed 22 Moslem rebels in five days of operations across Algeria, the Algerian official news agency APS said yesterday.

injuring at least 18 people and killing about 100 in the capital, Algiers.

The government forces also freed an unidentified citizen who had been kidnapped and was being held by the three gunmen, it added.

Another militant, armed with sawn-off shotgun, was gunned down on Tuesday in Algiers, it said.

French bishops say condoms necessary in fight against AIDS

PARIS (AP) - In a report contradicting Vatican doctrine, the French Bishops Conference said yesterday that the use of condoms is "necessary" in preventing the spread of AIDS.

Report: Two German scientists sold top secret nuclear data to Iraq

VIENNA (Reuters) - The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed yesterday that two German scientists had sold top secret nuclear data to Iraq to help its bid to manufacture the atomic bomb.

French bishops say condoms necessary in fight against AIDS

Heinz Schaab, was involved in selling nuclear secrets to Baghdad.

Report: Two German scientists sold top secret nuclear data to Iraq

um. President Saddam Hussein ordered a crash program to build a nuclear device in September 1990, a month after his troops invaded Kuwait.

Sierra Leone national conference backs February 26 election

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (Reuters) - A national conference voted yesterday for multi-party elections in Sierra Leone to go ahead as scheduled on February 26, rejecting calls for polling to be postponed.

The conference brought together political parties, trade unions, women's organizations, traditional chiefs and representatives of people displaced by the rebel war.

not come to an end overnight." Security forces manned road blocks around the Bintumani conference center overlooking Freetown's Lumley beach.

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The Tibi phenomenon

NOTHING seems to delight Israelis more than a manifestation of national uniqueness. But it is doubtful the country will be proud of what may be a world first - the political phenomenon known as Ahmed Tibi.

That Tibi, an Israeli citizen, is a talented politician, writer, television personality, and polemicist is indisputable. As a gynecologist who at one time worked at Hadassah Hospital, he became friendly with prominent Israelis.

Known to have good connections with Yasser Arafat, he served as a conduit for Knesset members and government officials who wanted to establish contact with Arafat before it could be done openly.

But after the Oslo agreement was signed, Tibi became Arafat's official adviser and his spokesman in Israel. That an Israeli citizen can shape policies for a government still officially committed to Israel's destruction is at the very least anomalous.

True, democracies tend to let their citizens serve other governments and even other armies. But service at the highest political level for an adversary regime, while not necessarily punishable by law, is viewed as disloyal.

If an American became an official adviser to, say, the Chinese regime, it is difficult to imagine that he would be welcome at the White House.

Yet Tibi is not only a social, political, and media celebrity in Israel and a welcome guest at government offices. He is now a leader of a new political coalition - a triple union of his own newly formed party, the Progressive Party for

Peace, and the Islamic List - which intends to run for the Knesset. It is a formidable alliance, expected to win at least four seats in the upcoming election.

This, surely, is a unique political phenomenon. Tibi defines himself as a Palestinian who happens to have Israeli citizenship. His allegiance to Arafat is complete. And yet he will most likely be able to decide the fate of the Jewish state. If today's polls are at all indicative of the election results, there will again be a tie between pro-Oslo and anti-Oslo forces in the Knesset, and Tibi's party may hold the balance of power.

Perhaps the saddest aspect of this absurdity is that it is not really new. Tibi happens to be an Arafat official, so his affiliation is known. But the Hadash Party and the two Arab parties in the Knesset are no different. They toe the PLO line the way Communist parties in the West used to follow Moscow's policies.

That Tibi or the current Arab parties in the Knesset are Arabs is not the problem. All citizens of Israel are entitled to be represented in the Knesset, and there are Arabs in other parties whose right to affect Israel's fate is unimpeachable. What makes these parties different is that their allegiance is not to Israel, but to a dictatorial police state whose goals are anathema to the state. That they can determine the nation's future makes a mockery both of Zionism and democracy.

A congressman's complaint

POLICE brutality is so prevalent it hardly makes news. In major American cities the beatings of suspects on the street and in lockups are commonplace, but the vast majority of these never become known. If the beating of Rodney King by the Los Angeles police made headlines throughout the world, it was only because an amateur video photographer documented it and because it ultimately caused a blood-drenched riot.

Such brutality is prevalent in democracies mostly where racial and ethnic tensions are endemic. Explosive tensions, which make police work particularly dangerous, seem to create a culture of violence among law enforcers.

In Israel, too, severe tensions are the norm. Much police work is life-threatening, and the overcautious policeman sometimes display is eminently understandable. But that they sometimes let this anxiety get out of control, and that they routinely violate the law and indiscriminately brutalize everyone in their path, is a blot on the country's character and a threat to its integrity and credibility as a democracy.

Generalizations are, of course, as dangerous as they are unjust. Most policemen are disciplined, hard-working, and law-abiding public servants. But there are too many incidents in which officers are involved, and too many cover-ups of police outrages. One cannot escape the suspicion that there is tolerance of police brutality - if not actual encouragement and approval - at the top of the force and the Internal Security Ministry.

Right-wing activists, whose demonstrations

have been targeted by the police in the past two years, charge that the brutality is political. But the treatment of Chinese workers in last week's demonstration in Tel Aviv, and the following description of Israeli police conduct by US Congressman James Moran (Democrat-Virginia), who was in Jerusalem to observe the Palestinian elections, should disabuse them of this notion.

"A young Palestinian was pushed past me with his arm twisted behind him by a blue-coated policeman. Although I didn't witness any resistance, he must have said or done something that caused another policeman to ram a billy club under his neck, then another policeman hit him and another and another ... The image that is still the most riveting was the sight of the unarmed youth, defenselessly held on the ground while police officers armed with guns and clubs climbed over the backs of each other to land their blows on his body ... I witnessed the police laughing and making self-congratulatory gestures after the beating."

In this case, Congressman Moran filled the role of the camera in the Rodney King beating. He related the incident to Prime Minister Shimon Peres and was promised an investigation. But even if the guilty are punished, the problem will not disappear. If Israel wishes to call itself a civilized country, it will have to do more than resolve one transgression. Only a thorough investigation of the Internal Security Ministry and the police force by a state commission can begin to address the issue of police brutality satisfactorily.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SPEED LIMITS

Sir, - The recent report that the minister of transport intends to raise the speed limit to 100 km/h on inter-urban highways should fill all caring people with anxiety and foreboding. A public outcry is needed to change this foolish decision which will only aggravate the terrible current carnage on the roads.

The Livneh committee appointed by the minister to investigate the matter did not contain a single representative of the distinguished scientists opposed to any increase in the speed limit. But even this committee recommended the following:

1. Within cities where the normal speed limit is 50 km/h, special zones should be created near schools and other places of congregation where the limit is reduced to 30 km/h.

2. On well-constructed fast inter-urban roads, the speed limit should normally be 110 km/h, but reduced to 100 km/h or lower where the situation requires it.

3. For recommendation 2 to be adopted, it is essential that a massive effort be made to establish a proper enforcement procedure.

The minister ignored recommendation 1 which would undoubtedly have saved lives. Nothing was done

about the essential preliminary recommendation 3; but recommendation 2 was introduced as an "experiment" on selected roads and led to a disastrous overall increase in road deaths. The minister's claim to the contrary was convincingly rebutted by Dr. Eli Richter at a recent conference organized by the road safety group, Metuna.

Participants at this conference were told in detail how road deaths in the UK have been cut by 30 percent during the past decade, and that parallel results have been achieved in Holland, Denmark and Australia. By contrast, despite promises by distinguished Israeli statesmen that something would be done to reduce the road carnage, the number of road deaths in Israel during the same period has tragically increased.

It is now clear what action can lead to real progress - initiating a detailed program comparable to that of the UK. The British experts who participated in the conference will be delighted to provide guidance; they will tell the minister that increasing speed limits is the opposite of what is needed.

CYRIL DOMB

TRAVEL SUPPLEMENT

Sir, - When readers were invited to participate in a survey in order to have some influence in the choice of subject for the Thursday supplement, I do not think that we expected that it would take the form of yet another syndicated package.

The Chicago Sun-Times travel supplement is neither interesting nor of relevance to most readers in Israel. I had hoped that this feature

would provide an opportunity to expand the travel tips of Ham Shapiro, provide useful Israeli tourism information, bring back the hiking trails of Aviva Bar-Am and perhaps use free-lance articles on interesting travel experiences which were planned and budgeted from a source in Israel.

WENDY BLUMFIELD

'BLACK BLOOD'

Sir, - As the State of Israel and American Jews evolve and develop in their own distinct ways, it often seems as if we have less and less in common and can go for increasingly longer periods of functional indifference - until something comes along to remind us that things aren't so simple.

In the case of the by now widely known decision not to use "black blood," the policy was set to meet administrative convenience and budgetary constraints. Apparently few if any voices addressed the possibility of a violent reaction by Ethiopian Jews in Israel and I doubt that anybody even raised the potential impact of the policy on American Jews.

American Jews are puzzled and increasingly concerned about the blatant and vicious antisemitism expressed by the radical racist Black extremists. We have often pointed to Israel's reaching out and taking in the Jews of Ethiopia to deny the idea that Zionism is racism and to argue that Jews come in all colors. I don't have to dwell on how the black (and other) antisemites are using these revelations and the widely broadcast pictures of the January 28 riot at the Prime Minister's Office.

As the sole Jewish state in the world, Israel's actions will always impact positively or negatively on the Jews of the Diaspora. The welfare or comfort level of Diaspora Jews may not - and cannot - be the primary concern of a Jewish state, but nor should they be ignored. In this case, a concern for its potential impact of the blood policy on American Jews might have saved Israeli Jews a lot of pain.

GILBERT KOLLIN



Stop shadow boxing

With elections around the corner, the Likud is being forced, albeit reluctantly, to accommodate itself to the reality of the Oslo agreements, which, according to polls, now enjoy the support of some 60 percent of Israelis.

Even Ehud Olmert has stated that his party will start negotiating at the point where the present government leaves off.

At the same time, opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu is in the position of having to prove

that his party's policy on final-status negotiations, regarding issues like autonomy, Palestinian statehood, and the settlements, differs fundamentally from the Labor-Meretz program. Above all, the Likud must show that it is the only party that can be trusted to "save" Jerusalem both from Yasser Arafat and from Prime Minister Peres.

But does Jerusalem need "saving" from Shimon Peres? In recent statements, Peres's position was that "Jerusalem will not be on the negotiating table with the Palestinians at any time in the future." Jerusalem in the past was only the capital for the Jews, and it is first-class nonsense to create something like Berlin. And "Israel's agreement to the Oslo accords was intended to remove Jerusalem from any negotiations. [Other] compromises are necessary in order to avoid the need for compromises over Jerusalem."

Such talk is, of course, totally unacceptable to Palestinians, including 150,000 Jerusalemites for whom the city has been "united" by force since 1967. So whatever the nature of the informal, academic talks on Jerusalem now being conducted with the Palestinians, it looks as if in its public stance on the future of the

DAN LEON

Oslo negotiator Yair Hirschfeld has written that negotiators must "check many, many possibilities of how to bridge gaps. It is important that you discuss matters in an easy atmosphere, where you can easily retreat from positions."

In the public eye, Peres appears deliberately to be doing the very opposite over Jerusalem. Just as Begin gave up Sinai in order, as he thought, to save the West Bank, so Peres is prepared for compromise on other issues in order to save Jerusalem.

The West Bank was nevertheless lost Israel, which has enjoyed a Jewish majority for the last 150 years, is not going to lose Jerusalem - but in the end it is going to have to find ways and means of sharing sovereignty there with the Palestinians.

Comparisons with Berlin are irrelevant, but it is pertinent to point out that in the eyes of the world, Jerusalem is a unique city where exclusive Jewish control is untenable if it denies the legitimate rights of a third of its residents, who maintain their own religious as well as national loyalties.

Both sides are engaging in a sort of shadowboxing. Israel continues to harass the Palestinians and confront the Europeans at Orient House; Palestinians register 10,000 properties of theirs in west Jerusalem. (According to Meron Benvenisti, about a quarter of the property in west Jerusalem at the end of the Mandate belonged to Palestinians, and about 60 percent, if one includes land annexed to the Jewish sector of Jerusalem after 1948. However one views Jerusalem's future, Benvenisti correctly points out that such legacies of the past cannot be discounted.)

The author is co-managing editor of the Palestine-Israel Journal.

It's their economy, stupid!

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

It is a bedrock axiom of America's policy toward Russia that it wants economic reform to succeed. It is time to ask: Why? The usual answer is this: Because economic liberation leads to political liberation, market economics produce democracy.

But this proposition is no law of history. It is a contingent fact. It happened in Chile, for example, but not in China. Democracy depends on many things, including - it should not surprise us - the political culture of a nation.

And the political culture of Russia stretching back as far as the eye can see is not encouraging. Until 1992 it was a story of centuries of authoritarianism interrupted in 1917 for a nine-month experiment in democracy - anarchy, really - that produced Bolshevik rule.

Then just two months ago, less than four years after the fall of communism, the Russian people in free elections put their parliament in the hands of Communists and fascists. In the coming June presidential elections, they will likely return a Communist ruler to the Kremlin.

And even if the Communists don't win, what can we expect from Boris Yeltsin? He has already adopted much of the hardline foreign policy of the "nationalist" camp - not just unleashing brutality in Chechnya, but fomenting civil war in Georgia, planting Russian military bases in Armenia and Georgia, grabbing for control of Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea oil, preparing to swallow a compliant Belarus. Indeed, Russia's declared policy toward the Commonwealth of Independent States is to force CIS "integration" i.e. Russian hegemony, on all the countries of the Old Soviet Union.

Yeltsin has a new foreign minister to fit the new foreign policy: a former head of the KGB whose last diplomatic mission was an attempt to undermine the US-led and Saddam coalition of 1991. As for economics, Yeltsin has just fired his cabinet's last market reformer.

Shared sovereignty in Jerusalem. It's the only rational way

tractable shape. Jerusalem can then be approached like other issues which lead themselves to a "rational" solution.

Jerusalem is, after all, part of a wider scene. If, as intellectuals from both sides have noted, the problem of Jerusalem stems from its symbolic role as "the fullest articulation of the emotions and prejudices people have toward the sum of issues comprising the entire conflict," a way must be found to defuse those issues one by one, so that the conflict as a whole can begin to assume a

shared sovereignty in Jerusalem. It's the only rational way.

With all the complications involved, therefore, the most acceptable principled solution is going to be Jerusalem as the capital of two states.

Party politics have their own norms, particularly in election periods; yet to declare that there will be no negotiations over Jerusalem borders on the irresponsible. Elections come and go, but without a commitment to continuous political discourse with our neighbors, talk of a new Middle East has a hollow ring.

Peres sees the rise and proliferation of Islamic fundamentalism as the common threat to the region. However, many of the countries in the region view Israel as the main threat to the region. Their adamant stand against allowing Israel to join the coalition in the Gulf War vividly illustrated that the Arab states are still united in their opposition to Israel.

While the US is currently playing an active role in the "peace process," this participation may be ephemeral. The US is in the process of defining its role in a new unipolar world. It is quite likely that its enormous monetary deficit and internal social problems may lead it to reduce its involvement in international disputes.

That Peres sees democracy as the panacea for all the region's problems reflects his pervasive ethnocentric attitude. While Israel may embrace democracy as a preferred model, a great many Arabs reject the notion. Many view democracy as an alien element used by the US to subjugate Arabs.

The struggle between Islamic fundamentalism and democracy is in its embryonic stages. Until it is resolved, any movement toward modernization and economic union is premature.

To achieve peace, Peres says, "the basic problems of the Middle East need to be approached realistically." Realistically: While Peres talks peace, Arafat talks jihad, while Peres talks of economic integration, the Arabs talk of the US's attempts to exert hegemonic control through its proxy Israel.

While Israelis hold peace rallies and put peace stickers on their cars, Palestinian children wear pins showing a Palestinian state encompassing Israel.

This is the reality of the Middle East today, and no amount of wishful thinking or visionary dreaming will change it.

The writer is a former US military intelligence officer and a candidate in international relations at the Hebrew University.

Fatal flaw

SHAWN M. PINE

Prime Minister Peres is seeking, by sheer will, to transform the Middle East from a war-torn, strife-ridden region filled with hatred into a vibrant, economic, democratic, confederation of states in which Israel will play a vital role. His goal is the "creation of a regional community of nations... modeled on the European Community."

One of the main challenges is the growing threat of Islamic fundamentalism, which Peres sees as the "chief danger facing the region." To counter this threat, he prescribes the development of "institutional democratization," accompanied by the "modernization" of the region.

According to Peres, democratization is the solution to ending violence in the region, and "economic and social development are the criteria for successful democratization of the Middle East."

Unfortunately, the historical and empirical foundations upon which Peres has constructed his vision are fatally flawed. Trying to model the Middle East after the European Community is a naive and spurious venture.

Today's European Community rose from the rubble of a continent devastated by a world war. It was built on the massive influx of economic support from the US. These countries were united against a common threat, the Soviet Union, in a bipolar world.

Moreover, the US exercised benign hegemonic control over Western Europe and compelled these countries, through political and military leadership, to suppress their individual animosities toward each other. Finally, the countries of Western Europe have experienced democracy for at least 50 years.

Consequently, they have had the opportunity to inculcate the democratic values necessary for them to eschew violence as a viable option to resolve their differences.

Unfortunately, today's Middle East lacks any of the criteria needed to draw parallels between the two regions. Unlike Europe of 1945, the main belligerents in any potential future regional conflict have their armies intact. Not

Trying to model the Mideast after the EC is a naive and spurious venture

having experienced the level of destruction that visited Europe in World War II, the countries of the Middle East have not forsaken the use of force as a viable option for conflict resolution.

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Handwritten signature: JAWICO 1996

A dozen years ago, London securities trader Michael Chance took a flyer on an unknown stock - his own future as a singer.

Singer's Chance-y move pays off

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Chance, 40 and the father of two, vividly remembers that previous appearance, in Handel's oratorio Belshazzar with the Stuttgart Chamber Choir and the Israel Chamber Orchestra.

Every man is capable of singing falsetto, if trained, he says. "It's like when you blow a recorder with more air than normal and you hear a squeaky tone," he explains.

developing and enlarging and improving repertoire. But as for Oberon, I have done it in three productions, but the nature of the writing is so that it makes the voice sexless and disembodied and not of this world.

business "people are competitive, of course they are. But I'm determined to have a good time and have fun. The basis of all this is to agree to play together rather like a sport team.

music concert series - Chance will perform a program focusing on Monteverdi and Purcell.

He will also sing the famous aria from Handel's Rinaldo, featured in the film Forinelli, which is about the life of a famous castrato.

Cave: Killing us softly

NEW RELEASES TIRZAH AGASSI

There is something original about exploring humanity's underbelly with rich harmonies and a jolly swing. But a whole album?



Nick Cave's lyrics are as gruesome as ever, but his melodies are definitely getting stronger.

Al Pacino gets a co-star he just couldn't refuse

RIC LEYVA NEW YORK

Al Pacino is absorbing. "Acting comes out of chaos," he says, talking with his hands. "You have to always be open for new stuff to happen, always keeping the antennae out, so it's not so much this [he holds his hands up like blinders] as it's that [he swings his arms wide] so you can then select and make the right choice."

anticipated work with De Niro, although limited to three scenes, was worth the wait for Pacino.

that again. Even with all the success that came." Pacino's greatness wasn't self-taught. Before winning acceptance to the Actors' Studio to work with the legendary Lee Strasberg, he studied with Charles Laughton at the Herbert Berghof Studio.

Orgad, spiritual master still

Concerts dedicated to a single composer are rare events in our musical life, and so thanks must go to pianist Zecharia Plavin for organizing such an evening in Ben-Zion Orgad's honor.

CONCERT ROUNDUP soloists, soprano Shosh Lagil and mezzo-soprano Shira Schweizer and Shira Carmon.

is teachers presented a Winter Concert of music and dance. What was particularly attractive about this program was its variety and the fact that it was performed mostly by seventh- to 12th-grade pupils.

Adam and Eve speak Yiddish, naturally

HUMASH NIEDER

By Itzik Manger, Hebrew commentary, Haim Heftz. Direction, Shmuel Bumin. Set and Costumes, Audrey Bergner. Music, Dabi Zaltzer. Lighting, Yehiel Oreg. Yiddish lyrics, the Israel Yiddish Theatre. At ZDA House, Tel Aviv. Hebrew title, Hymash Lieder.

yet another evening's entertainment that may be enjoyed by all. This time around there is an intriguing Hebrew annotation that helps to keep non-Yiddish speakers in the picture. It is narrated with great verve by Gad Yagil, who also figures in the main role.

THEATER REVIEW NAOMI DOUDAI Adam and Eve... Gad Yagil... Audrey Bergner... Dabi Zaltzer... Yehiel Oreg... Shmuel Bumin... Tracy Abramovitch

stereotype. His portrait of the Father of Mankind is full of life and altogether frivillous. Also greatly to his credit is the excellent diction with which he pays homage to the intrinsic beauties of Manger's fine Yiddish.

extraordinary singing voice is an intriguing choice, justified by her outstanding performance. Nurit Bani serves as her understudy with great charm, too.

The spotlight falls on three choreographers

DANCE REVIEW DORA SOWDEN

The Office, performed to Dvorak's Bagatelles Op. 47, had lively moments and rigid tension while people waited to be interviewed (presumably). Grand Duo, with Lou Harrison's wistful inventions for violin and piano (Eckart Lorenzen and Linda Dowdell), was splendidly buoyant and the dancing was excellent, the best of the evening.

Group's second program at the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center on February 7 did not have the thrust and pull of the first.

True, Morris himself danced a clever solo, Three Preludes, to music by Gershwin. In a black suit with white gloves and white socks that were the focus of movement in the dim light, he held the stage.

Somebody's Coming to See Me Tonight did have a folksy fascination, stimulated by Stephen Foster's songs.

A PREMIERE last week

set on its ability to not let an actor falter. It was especially vivid and even chilling, especially when the nine dancers moved in formation.

TOWER RECORDS' TOP 15 table with columns for Rank, Last Weeks on Chart, Artist, and Title.

Border Crossings advertisement featuring a tree illustration and text about American interactions with Israel.

Subscription form for Border Crossings magazine, including fields for Name, Address, City, and Tel./Fax.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1996

Trade deficit up, reversing trend

JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

THE trade deficit in January rose to \$1.05 billion, after showing a downward trend in November and December, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported yesterday.

Excluding diamond and oil imports, the trade deficit totaled \$990 million.

The bureau stressed, however, that the deficit's pace of increase has slowed down over the last quarter of 1995.

After hitting \$919m. in October, the trade deficit fell to \$613m. and \$506m. in November and December respectively, indicating an average 0.7 percent monthly for the October-December period.

In January last year the trade deficit, excluding oil and dia-

monds, stood at \$785m. Exports totaled just above \$1 billion in January. Including diamonds this figure jumped to \$1.55b.

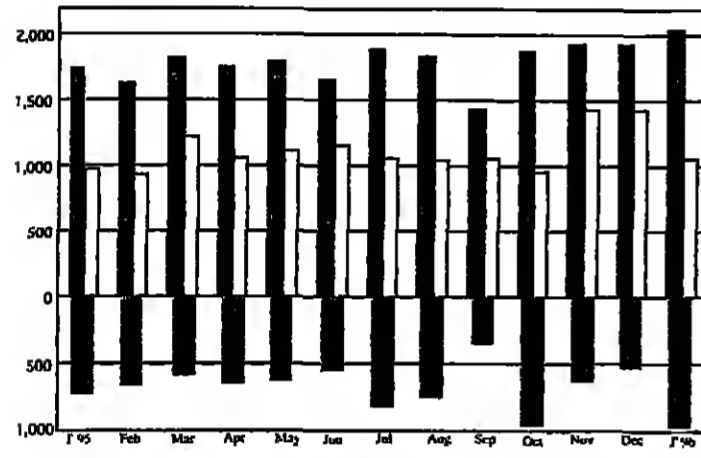
Imports in January totaled \$2.6b., with diamond and oil totaling \$0.5b., or 21% of all imports.

Raw materials comprised 49% of imports, machinery and transportation and communication equipment came to 17%, and consumer goods totaled 13%.

Imports of consumer goods increased by 1.7% in the last quarter of 1995.

Some 30% of all exports, or \$0.5b., were diamonds, 63% were industrial goods and 6% were agricultural items.

The National Trade Deficit in Millions of Dollars



Iraq urges action against firms over Turkey dams

DAMASCUS (AP) - Iraq and Syria are considering taking action against European companies which are helping Turkey build dams on the Euphrates River, a senior Iraqi official disclosed yesterday.

"Among these measures is to deprive the French, British, Italian, Austrian, and Belgian companies which implement these dams of any projects that could become available in Syria or Iraq," Abdul-Sattar Salman told reporters after water crisis talks here.

Syria and Iraq have set aside their differences, because they fear Turkey plans to reduce the flows of the Euphrates and the Tigris River to divert their waters for hydroelectric and irrigation projects. The rivers originate in Turkey, but are vital sources of water for Syria and Iraq.

Osem falls 4.75% after investor revealed

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

OSEM Industries plunged 4.75 percent on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE) yesterday as disappointed investors reacted to reports that the Renaissance Fund is the mysterious investor that purchased the company's stock in an off-market transaction last week.

Renaissance, which is owned by the Claridge group, yesterday informed the TASE that it gained control of 3.2% of the company's stock, increasing its share in the food giant to 24.2%. The shares

were purchased for about NIS 60 million.

Last week capital market analysts speculated the mysterious foreign investor was Swiss Nestle company, which reportedly purchased 4.9% of Osem's shares from Bank Discount Provident funds two weeks ago.

It is not clear whether the shares were actually purchased by Nestle, since under securities law an investor is obliged to report the

purchase of stock to the exchange only if more than 5% of any stock is acquired.

A capital market source said Claridge's decision to increase its holdings in Osem is mainly due to Nestle's purchase of shares in the company and the Swiss company's options to purchase 10% of Osem before June, when the options expire.

The source forecasted that Claridge will try to continue to increase its share through the Renaissance Fund.

Int'l group proposes Russian-Israeli gas pipeline

Segev to consider \$2 billion plan

RACHEL NEIMAN

ENERGY Minister Gonen Segev will consider a \$2 billion Russian-Israeli gas pipeline that has been proposed by an international consortium.

A consortium made up of local fuel importer Del-Men, Turkish petroleum pipeline corporation BOTAS, Russian gas company Gazprom and TransCanada Pipelines met yesterday with Segev to present a schedule for construction of the proposed pipeline.

The consortium is ready to begin negotiating the details in November.

The project, called Lasserre, would carry natural gas via existing pipelines from gas fields on the Armenian/Georgian border to the northeastern corner of Turkey.

A line would then be constructed through central Turkey to link up with existing pipes leading to Ankara and southwards to Iskenderun.

From southern Turkey, the pipeline would run underwater for 480 kilometers at depths of up to 1,800 meters outside the territorial waters of Syria and Lebanon and would enter Israel at three points - the electric power plants at Haifa, Tel Aviv

and Ashdod.

Consortium representatives also met with the Israel Electric Corporation's natural gas division yesterday evening.

TransCanada senior VP Jake Epp said the pipeline could be completed by the end of 1999.

Gazprom is the world's largest producer of natural gas, supplying 40 percent of Europe's natural gas.

During the breakup of the USSR, Gazprom continued supplying its customers without interruption - proof of the company's stability and reliability as a partner, Del-Men president Yosef Ram said.

TransCanada has been involved in several overseas pipeline projects, including the 1,600-km, long Gulf-South Asia project that transports gas from Qatar to Pakistan.

"Even if there was peace with Lebanon and Syria, it's still more cost effective to go underwater," said Ram.

Third partner BOTAS holds sole rights to both transport and purchase of natural gas and crude oil in Turkey.

As compared with the proposed

Egyptian pipeline currently under negotiation, Ram said all members of his consortium "could sign immediately without complicated legislation."

The proposal, which took two years to formulate, projects initial imports of up to four or five billion cubic meters of gas to Israel and 10 billion cubic meters to the Turkish market.

Market development is key, said Ram.

"We see the nations on either side of the underwater pipeline as potential markets," he said.

"While Cyprus is small, Lebanon is a most attractive market [capable of consuming] quantities no less than those of the Israeli market."

He added that Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority were other potential customers.

"Gas is not cheap," said Gazprom's head of foreign economic relations Nikolai Belyi, "but it will be competitive with other energy sources."

He saw the heavy smog blanketing Tel Aviv and added that "the Turkish ambassador told us it took only two years to clean the skies of Ankara," following the widespread use of natural gas for electricity production.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Provident funds reform bill passes first reading: A major bill aimed at reforming the management of provident funds barely elicited a yawn in the Knesset yesterday, passing its first reading by a vote of 4-1. Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, who touted the bill as one of the five most important pieces of economic legislation introduced by this government, did not even bother to stay for the vote.

The bill is meant to prevent conflicts of interest created by the fact that provident funds are generally run by banks, which have a clear interest in having the funds invest in their own stocks. The bill states that a majority of the fund's board of directors must be from the public rather than the bank, and all those who sit on the fund's investment committee must be from the public. It also gives the fund manager the status of a trustee, who is obligated to act exclusively in the fund members' interests, and imposes both civil and criminal penalties for any violations of the law's provisions. Evelyn Gordon.

Hapoalim, Leumi provident funds achieve positive real yields: Bank Hapoalim and Bank Leumi provident funds achieved positive real yields in January, while Bank Discount's funds reported negative returns.

Bank Hapoalim's Gadish fund, the largest fund in the country, achieved a real yield of 0.14 percent last month. The fund manages assets of NIS 13.3 billion. Bank Leumi's Orzma fund, the third largest fund in the country, reported a real yield of 0.15%. The fund manages assets of NIS 10m. The bank's other funds also achieved real yields.

In contrast, Bank Discount's Tamar, which manages assets of NIS 11b., achieved a negative real yield of 0.14% in January. Among the smaller funds, United Mizrahi Bank's Afid fund had a nominal yield of 1.2% last month, similar to the rise in the Consumer Price Index. First International Bank's Meitav fund achieved a real positive yield of 0.3%. Galit Lipkis Beck.

Galilee Herbal Remedy (GHR), which is owned by Kibbutz Kfar Hanassi, has signed a three-year contract to supply Migralead, its migraine product, to the US-based Solaray. According to the contract, the company will supply \$300,000 worth of Migralead annually. The agreement also includes the supply of four tons of Feverfew per year. Solaray plans to use the raw material in their new migraine product, which will be distributed throughout the US. Galit Lipkis Beck.

Gal: Chances slim of finishing bill before IEC franchise ends

EVELYN GORDON

A JOINT Knesset committee will try to finish the electricity bill before the Israel Electric Corporation's franchise expires on March 5, but the chances of its succeeding seem "slim," committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor) said yesterday.

Gal said that if the bill could not be finished by that date, the committee would temporarily extend the IEC's franchise for nine months or so. However, he agreed to try to prevent that outcome after IEC representatives said it would be a disaster for the company.

IEC managing director Rafi

Peled said the company is already finding it difficult to raise capital because of the uncertainty over its future. Similarly, he said, the company's board has already started to raise permission for long-term projects, since these projects might not be profitable under the terms of the new franchise.

If this state of uncertainty is extended for nine months, he said, the company could do little but take care of current production needs, with disastrous consequences for the country's future electricity needs.

Foreign tourism to Eilat static despite rise in hotel rooms

HAIM SHAPIRO

THE number of foreign tourists coming to Eilat during the last three months of 1995 remained almost static compared with 1994, although the number of hotel rooms increased by more than 10 percent.

According to figures released yesterday by the Eilat Hotel Association, there were 62,747 foreign guests there during October, November and December 1995, compared to 62,717 during the same months of 1994. However,

the number of hotel rooms rose from about 5,000 to about 5,700.

Hotel sources said the reason for what is in effect a slump in tourism is that German tour organizers have largely abandoned Eilat.

The German tourists are said to be unhappy with the continuing construction throughout the town.

Meanwhile, despite the fact that the number of foreign visitors did

not rise, the number of foreign charter flights during the three-month period went up from 258 in 1994 to 299 in 1995, a rise of 18%.

At the same time, El Al had 67 direct flights during the October through December period, compared to 73 such flights in the corresponding months of 1994, while El Al's connecting flights rose from seven in 1994 to 103 in 1995.

In a related development, a Dutch charter company has agreed to continue two charter flights a week to Eilat throughout the summer.

MKs ask Ben-Yair to probe bank overcharging of customers

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset's social lobby yesterday asked Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair to do a thorough examination of bank overcharging of both the kibbutzim and other groups, such as mortgage-holders.

The request was prompted by a report by Prof. Uriel Procaccia, which said the banks had overcharged the kibbutzim substantially on their loans.

MK Shaul Amor (Likud), who heads the social lobby, said it was very important that whatever solution is found for the kibbutzim apply to the general population as well.

"It is inconceivable that there should be discrimination among different sectors," he said.

Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet, who met with the group, said he has sent a letter to supervisor of banks Ze'ev Abeles detailing 74 techniques the banks use to overcharge clients, and demanded that Abeles put a stop to these techniques.

Ultimately, however, legislation might be necessary, since Abeles has traditionally seen his role as protecting the banks rather than the customers, he said.

"This affair touches on all bank customers," Shetreet stressed, agreeing with Amor that there

should be a thorough investigation of all bank debts, and not just those of the kibbutzim.

Shetreet said he did not think an investigation into the affair should hold up the kibbutzim debt arrangement, however. Though this agreement includes a promise by the kibbutzim to waive any claims against the banks, no court would uphold this clause if it later turned out that the agreement had been based on false information, he said.

Dan Tichon (Likud) said it was very important to resolve the matter quickly, because the reports of persistent bank overcharging are liable to cause people to lose faith in the banking system, which in turn could cause a run on the banks.

"It seems to me that the earthquake is growing," he said. "It's like a fire in a dry field."

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BE ADVISED that there will be a hearing of an application to dissolve your marriage (Case no. 2890/95), submitted by Rivka Buchris, ID 58048147, at the Family Court, 1 Rehov Weizmann, Tel Aviv, before Justice Shitufman, at 9.00 a.m. on February 28, 1996.
If you do not attend the hearing, the court may hand down a judgment, in your absence.
Zvi Rish, Adv.

THE ISRAEL - CANADA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

The annual event of the Chamber will take place on Thursday, February 15, 1996, at 5:00 p.m. at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel

Subject: "Doing Business with Canada in an Era of Free Trade between the Two Countries"

Guest speaker: Avraham (Belga) Shohat, Minister of Finance

Participants:
Amram Sivan, Chairman of the Board of Bank Hapoalim
Dan Fropper, President of the Manufacturers Association of Israel
Jonathan Kolber, President of Claridge Israel Inc.
Ya'akov Perry, President of CellCom Israel
Yossi Yard, CEO of International Technologies

A festive reception in honor of David Berger, H.E. the Ambassador of Canada will follow the event.

For reservations, Tel. 03-6202544, Fax. 03-6202513.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Patish (foreign currency deposit rates) (12.2.96)

Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (250,000)	4.375	4.250	4.250
Swiss franc (200,000)	4.375	4.250	4.250
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.750	1.750	2.000
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.250	0.375	0.250

(Rates very higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (12.2.96)

CURRENCY AND TRADEMARKS	CURRENCY AND TRADEMARKS		BANKNOTES		BANKNOTES
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
Currency basket	3.4907	3.5471	3.04	3.115	3.115
U.S. dollar	3.0540	3.1440	3.04	3.17	3.170
German mark	2.0288	2.1328	2.01	2.17	2.170
French franc	4.7376	4.8140	4.68	4.89	4.778
British pound	0.8108	0.8307	0.81	0.83	0.8190
Japanese yen (100)	2.8528	2.9428	2.84	2.98	2.912
Dutch guilder	1.8742	1.9048	1.84	1.94	1.888
Swiss franc	2.5738	2.6132	2.52	2.66	2.582
Swedish krona	0.4441	0.4513	0.43	0.44	0.448
Norwegian krone	0.4904	0.4982	0.47	0.48	0.488
Danish krone	0.5428	0.5511	0.53	0.54	0.548
French franc	0.8828	0.8998	0.88	0.89	0.877
Canadian dollar	2.2544	2.2908	2.21	2.28	2.272
Australian dollar	2.3368	2.3784	2.29	2.41	2.392
S. African rand	0.0480	0.0517	0.04	0.04	0.043
British pound (10)	1.0222	1.0370	1.01	1.02	1.028
Australian dollar (10)	2.3648	2.3928	2.34	2.43	2.418
British pound (100)	1.0908	1.1098	1.08	1.08	1.081
Japanese yen	—	—	—	—	—
Egyptian pound	—	—	—	—	—
ECU	3.8048	3.8272	3.77	—	—
West part	4.5728	4.5848	4.52	—	—
Spanish peseta (100)	2.4818	2.5318	2.44	—	—

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

Indexes static as traders wait for CPI

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ

205.72 +0.11% Maof index 214.54 +0.14%

Two-Sided index

INDEXES closed little changed yesterday after falling for two days, as investors waited for January inflation figures, due on Thursday.

"Everyone's waiting for the Consumer Price Index," said Dan Zacharie, a broker with Capital Future Markets, the Tel Aviv investment firm.

Forecasts for January's increase in consumer prices ranged from 0.7 percent to 1.3 percent, reflecting a mixed outlook on inflation.

If the CPI is high, said Zacharie, analysts are expecting an increase in interest rates.

"If it increases more than 0.7%, there will probably be a rate hike," he said.

The Bank of Israel last raised rates on February 1, when the rate at which it lends to banks went up to 14%, from 13.7%.

The Maof Index rose 0.14%, to 214.54 and the Two-Sided Index went up 0.11% to 205.72. Of 998 issues trading on the exchange, more than three shares fell for every two that rose.

Some NIS 86.6 million worth of shares traded, NIS 5m. below Sunday's level and about NIS 5m. below this month's trading level.

Osem fell 4.75% after "a hiding war" seemed to cool, said Zacharie.

News reports had speculated that Swiss concern Nestle was buying shares in Osem. Officials at Nestle, which holds an option to buy 10% of Osem's common stock, refused to comment; the

option expires in July. The Reconnaissance Fuod, connected in the Claridge investment firm, announced that it had purchased 3.2% of Osem on February 5, bringing its stake in the food company up to 24%.

"The market incorrectly believes that Nestle isn't interested in buying more of Osem," said David Roseberg, head of research at the Herzliya investment firm Pacific Mediterranean.

"Nestle has shown it wants to own more than 10%," said Roseberg. "You have to assume they'll be back in the market."

Prime Minister Shimon Peres's call Sunday night for early elections had no impact on trading, as it was expected, said Zacharie.

Zacharie said that investors were concerned about the country's wideoing trade deficit and a weakening dollar. Israel Radin reported a \$1.05 billion trade deficit in January.

Koor, the most active share on the exchange, closed unchanged, as NIS 6.3m. worth of shares changed hands.

Deciding shares on the Maof Index included Clal (Israel) Ltd., which fell 0.5%; IDB Development Corp., which decreased 1%; Discount Investment Corp., which fell 0.5%; and Elbit, which went down 1.5%.

Gaining shares included Maof Index-listed Bank Hapoalim, which rose 1.25%. The bank rose after falling 10.5% from January 30 through Sunday, losses that are seen as exaggerated, said Zacharie. (Bloomberg)

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading Two-sided trading

Table of stock prices and changes for various companies in the Tel Aviv market, including Commercial Banks, Mortgage Banks, Financial Institutions, Insurance, Trade & Services, Property, Building & Agriculture, and Exploration.

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Table of international stock prices for various countries including New York, London, Frankfurt, and others, listing company names and price changes.

FTSE Index closes 10.3 points higher

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - UK blue chips overcame early jitters over domestic political worries, ending modestly higher yesterday after a boost from weaker-than-expected January producer price data and another sharp rise on Wall Street.

The FTSE Index closed up 10.3 at 3,726.6.

FRANKFURT - German shares closed higher than last session, as weaker Bunds continue to weigh on market. Dealers say investor activity limited by fall-off in debt, but cite selective technically-driven trades on individual stocks.

The 30-share DAX Index closed up 16.12 points at 2,428.05. In post-bourse trade the index fell 6.48 to 2,428.59.

PARIS - French shares ended in positive territory but off best levels as bond market weakness takes shine off stock prices.

The CAC-40 index closed up 7.02 points at 1,967.67.

ZURICH - Swiss shares closed slightly firmer but off the day's highs following a recovery in federal bond futures.

Weak futures in the morning half of the session had pressured the market. Volumes were low as investors continued to remain on the sidelines, dealers said. However, the near-term outlook was judged to be positive.

The all-share SPI put on 4.33 points to 2,125.58.

TOKYO - The Tokyo stock market was closed for a public holiday. The market will re-open today.

HONG KONG - Hong Kong stocks closed a day of sleepy trading, moderated by the approach of next week's Chinese New Year holiday. The key Hang Seng Index coded 53.69 points lower at 11,256.59.

SYDNEY - The Australian share market ended lower in slow trade, led down by a gold sector that weakened with the price of the precious metal. The All Ordinaries Index closed 8.5 points lower at 2,263.3.

JOHANNESBURG - South African shares ended a relatively busy day weaker across the board as bullion's weakness and nervous sentiment drove most of the sector index lower. The all-share index lost 73.6 points to 6,800.1, industrials were down 39.9 to 8,445.4 and the gold index shed 79.7 points to 1,725.8.

Dow breaks 5,600, a record

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Dow Jones industrial average set a record for the sixth session in a row yesterday, closing above 5,600 points for the first time in an amazing display of bullishness by investors.

Based on early and unofficial data, the Dow Jones index closed up 58.53 points at 5,600.15, eclipsing last Friday's record of 5,541.42.

In the broader market, advancing issues led declines 13 to 9 on active volume of 402 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

Table of currency cross-rates for various countries including Sterling, Yen, Sfr, and FF.

Key Representative Rates

US dollar NIS 3.1770 +0.16%
Sterling NIS 4.7755 +0.25%
Mark NIS 2.1145 +0.02%

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

Table of New York market indexes including DJ Industrial, DJ Transport, NYSE Composite, etc.

Other stock market indexes

Table of other stock market indexes including FTSE 100, Nikkei 225, Hang Seng, etc.

Israeli stocks in NY

Table of Israeli stocks in NY including Osem, Koor, Maof, etc.

INFLATION MONEY

Table of inflation money rates including Dollar crossrates, Labor rates, etc.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Table of foreign financial data including Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds, and Mutual Funds.

INFLATION COMMODITIES AND METALS

Table of inflation commodities and metals including US commodities, London commodities, etc.

Spot market metals (US)

Table of spot market metals including Gold, Silver, Platinum, etc.

New York metal futures

Table of New York metal futures including Gold, Silver, Copper, etc.

London metal futures

Table of London metal futures including Gold, Silver, Copper, etc.

'Yediot' editors indicted

RAINE MARCUS

YEDIOT Aharonot editor Moshe Vardi and former news editor Ruth Ben-Ari were indicted yesterday by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court on three charges of commissioning and use of wiretapping.



'Yediot Aharonot' editor Moshe Vardi arrives at National Serious Crimes Squad headquarters for questioning last April. (Hanoach Gritinsky/Israel Sun)

Ben-Ari took leave from her post last week, following a three-year term, and will take on another position at the daily.

A trial date has not yet been set. Court president Judge Dan Arbel is expected to decide shortly who will preside over what promises to be a long trial.

According to the charge sheet, Ben-Ari and Vardi met with private investigators Amir Ben-Asher and Ya'acov Bak at the end of 1992 at Ben-Ari's Ramat Gan home to discuss commissioning the wiretapping of two home phones of former Yediot editor-in-chief Dov Yudkovsky, after the latter moved to *Ma'ariv*. Bak and Ben-Asher asked fellow private investigator Rafi Friedan to install wiretapping equipment on Yudkovsky's phone lines.

Friedan is presently on trial for some 50 charges of wiretapping, allegedly on behalf

after serving a 27-month sentence for other wiretapping charges, is now on trial with Friedan in the media wiretapping case.

The second charge relates to an illegally recorded cellular phone conversation, taped at the end of 1992 or the beginning of 1993, between Nimrodi and Yediot publisher Nomi Mozes. According to the indictment, the recording was passed on to Bak by Friedan, then Vardi kept the cassette and both he and Ben-Ari listened to it.

Vardi and Ben-Ari are also charged with conspiring to tap the home and office phones of Yediot graphic artist Orit Lipshitz in 1992. They allegedly asked Bak and Ben-Asher to hug her phones, but the latter failed due to technical difficulties.

Prosecution witnesses who will testify against the pair include Bak and Ben-Asher. Bak, a former IDF and police officer, is serving a term for conspiracy and attempted murder. Ben-Asher, a former IDF intelligence officer, is awaiting a verdict on the same charges. Friedan, Mizaki, and former Bezek technician Baruch Rubinstein will also testify against Vardi and Ben-Ari.

Friedan allegedly hired Honi Mizaki, a former Bezek technician and a bugging specialist, to plant two bugs in the Bezek junction box near Yudkovsky's home. Mizaki, recently released from prison

Tabloid editors' indictment won't stop circulation war

BACKGROUND

RAINE MARCUS

YEDIOT Aharonot editor Moshe Vardi has continually denied all connection to wiretapping. *Ma'ariv's* publishers, say Yediot sources, were the real culprits who commissioned wiretapping on newspaper and business rivals.

Former *Ma'ariv* chief editor and publisher Ofer Nimrodi, awaiting trial on 15 charges of commissioning wiretapping and obstructing justice by paying hush money, resigned his post under pressure by the National Federation of Journalists. He is still the daily's chairman.

Nimrodi was charged in August along with *Ma'ariv* security officer David Ronen, but has not yet filed a plea, because his lawyers claim they have not yet received all prosecution evidence. The case may take years.

Nialist indicted on criminal charges must suspend himself until the end of criminal proceedings," she said this week. Vardi has said he will not resign. Tomorrow the federation is to decide on further action.

Although the three charges against Vardi are somewhat less than Nimrodi's 15, he still faces a dilemma which will only add to the long and bitter circulation war between the two dailies. If he resigns, it is not known who will replace him. A replacement for Ben-Ari has still not yet been appointed.

On Army Radio yesterday, Yediot diplomatic reporter Shimo Shiffer (whose phooze was also tapped, allegedly on Nimrodi's orders), spoke out in favor of Vardi's decision not to resign. "The trial could take years," he said. "What happens if [Vardi] is found innocent, and in the meantime has resigned his post?"

The war between the tabloids has not yet ended. Reporting of the media wiretapping case has for the past two years been contentious, and will continue to be. Last Friday, with the news of the impending indictments, *Ma'ariv* published a full-page spread (and front-page teaser) "convicting" Vardi and Ben-Ari. Yediot, for its part, gives anything implicating Nimrodi extensive coverage.

Sara Friedman, herself a *Ma'ariv* employee, proposed last year that the Itim news agency cover the case to put an end to the wars on the printed page.

WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy. Rise in temperatures.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	LOW	HI	Wind
Buenos Aires	59	79	cloudy
Chicago	37	57	partly cloudy
London	43	53	partly cloudy
Los Angeles	59	79	cloudy
Manila	79	99	partly cloudy
Moscow	37	57	partly cloudy
New York	37	57	partly cloudy
Paris	43	53	partly cloudy
Shanghai	37	57	partly cloudy
Sydney	59	79	partly cloudy

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the nine of spades, ace of hearts, queen of diamonds, and ace of clubs.

Unions to disrupt economy over gov't-Histadrut pension plan

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE large labor unions are threatening to disrupt the economy as a prelude to an all-out strike, unless the government cancels its pension settlement, which they say violates workers' rights and gravely decreases their pensions.

On Thursday, air traffic at Ben-Gurion Airport will be seriously disrupted as El Al and Airports Authority workers hold protest meetings from 10 a.m. to noon. Some schools will open late, as secondary school teachers start work at 10 a.m. instead of 8.

Bezek and civilian employees of the IDF are to join the sanctions next week by holding protest meetings.

The union heads of the Israel Aircraft Industries, El Al, Airports Authority, secondary teachers, Bezek, TAAS, and IDF civilian workers have set up a headquarters to coordinate their campaign.

At a press conference yesterday, they claimed that Treasury regulations issued two years ago violate all the promises the Histadrut made not to damage the rights of pension fund members, and seriously erode their pensions.

LAI union head Haim Katz said the situation began with government-spread reports of horrendous actuarial deficits accumulated by the Histadrut's pension funds, which were intended to cause panic and prepare the way for the Draconian new pension plan.

In exchange for ensuring workers' pensions, thought to be in jeopardy due to the "actuarial deficits," the government decided to cut the pension rights.

However, when the union heads had the pension funds' financial situation checked by independent experts, it transpired that the huge "deficit" was the result of calculations based on fictitious figures. In fact, the largest pension funds, Mivtahim and Makefet, which ensure two-thirds of the country's workers, have no actuarial deficit at all.

Pension adviser Dan Sprinckak said that in order to cover the deficit of the remaining third, the Finance Ministry decided to take money from the pension savings of workers insured with the other funds. In addition, "instead of counting the worker's last wage as the basis for pension, the Treasury decided the basis would be the average pay of the last three years, drastically reducing the worker's pension."

Moreover, added Katz, "The Treasury, while screaming bloody murder at the pension funds' so-called deficits, pays budgetary pension to tens of thousands of civil servants and government corporation employees directly from the state budget. Nobody ever dreamed of cutting their pensions, or saying the funds are empty, because there are no funds for it."

"We are not asking for charity. This is money deducted from our pay year after year until we are 65, and money which the employers put aside for us instead of adding it to our wages." Secondary School Teachers' Union head Shosh Oren said. "Let us grow old with dignity, with rights we have paid for in full."

Katz warned that, if necessary, Israeli workers would take to the streets and paralyze the entire country, as France's workers did in December, in their fight for pension rights.

The Treasury said yesterday that the government-Histadrut pension agreement ensures all the members' rights.

Rafael workers burn tires, block highway over dismissals

DAVID RUDGE

ANGRY Rafael workers burned tires and blocked the main Aco-Haifa highway outside the giant armaments development authority plant yesterday in protest over the planned dismissal of 90 employees.

Police dispersed the demonstrators by force, after repeated requests to disband quietly were ignored. Eight of the protesters were arrested, seven of whom were still being questioned last night, although they were expected to be released.

The disturbances erupted after thousands of workers downed tools and walked to the factory gates, where 70 fired colleagues are staging a hunger strike. The strikers, who have pitched a tent near the entrance to the plant, are demanding that management cease dismissal procedures and return to negotiations.

The demonstration spilled over onto the main road, which the protesters blocked on and off for two hours, causing massive traffic jams, before police moved in.

Union leaders warned that their members were becoming increasingly bitter and said they would not be responsible for actions which the employees might stage on their own.

During a mass rally afterwards chanting protesters called for the resignation of Rafael managing director Yitzhak Gat, whom they accused of intransigence and trying to split the works committees.

Management, however, appears determined to continue dismissing 350 government employees, an action approved by the Civil Service Commission and the National Labor Court.

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Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including "JACOBI'S" and "Today".